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# DIARY OF TRAVELS

IN

THREE QUARTERS OF THE GLOBE.

BY

AN AUSTRALIAN SETTLER.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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# DIARY OF TRAVELS,

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## CHAPTER I.

Fellow-Passengers to Constantinople—Turkish Indifference to Discomfort—A Cage full of Women and Children—Gulf of Smyrna—Remarkable Illusion—Smyrna and its Narrow Streets—Figs, and How they are Cured—A Magnificent Prospect—Turkish Ragamuffins for the Crimea—Departure for Smyrna.

WEDNESDAY, December 13, 1854. We have a fair wind and smooth sea, but the sky looks dark and threatening. Of cabin-passengers there are but two besides myself. One of these is a Greek merchant of Alexandria, who I turned to account by practising French upon him. The other a major, on sick leave from one of the Queen's regiments at Madras, I find an agreeable and sociable companion, and in



his society the feeling of solitude under which I departed from Alexandria is rapidly passing away.

The paucity of cabin is amply compensated by the abundance of deck passengers, of whom we have no fewer than two hundred, mostly Turks returning to Stamboul after a pilgrimage to Mecca.

Several showers of heavy rain fell to-day, to the great discomfort of this turbaned crowd; but the patient indifference with which the fellows endure their miseries it is edifying to behold. Amid wet, slop, dirt, and discomfort each gathers himself up under a thick shaggy cloak, a carpet, a skin of leather, or some contrivance to turn off the pelting rain, and quietly smokes his chibouk till the sun comes forth again, when jackets, slippers, turbans, and articles of apparel of all shapes and colours are hung out and spread upon every available rope and stanchion to become so far dried as the next approaching shower will permit.

Besides the men there are some children

and a number of women, white, black, and brown, who are all stowed away in a kind of den or large coop, set up upon the quarterdeck, of which it occupies one entire side. It is grated round and roofed over with tarpaulings and sails, but is not more than three to four feet high, so that the inmates can never stand upright. Many of them have come, too, from Beyrout, and must have been already five or six days thus caged.

Through the bars one occasionally detects a pair of bright eyes peeping, or gets a glimpse of a female form reclining amid cushions and pillows, with which the deck appears to be covered. Doubtless the habits of restraint and confinement in the ordinary life of these poor women render this durance less distressing, but with such an addition to the usual disagreeables of shipboard existence, a sea voyage must indeed be a cruel trial to the most enduring patience.

Through the openings of the curtains, which hang within the bars of the cage,

may also be seen baskets and bags of fruit and bread, with jars of water, which constitute the whole commissariat of the inmates; the men on deck, too, feed themselves in the same way, none receiving any kind of provision from the ship's stores.

Thursday, 14th. Last night the wind shifted to the westward, and blew hard, with much rain. Our little ship rolled so violently that it was with difficulty we could maintain possession of our narrow berths, and sleep was out of the question. My two fellow-passengers looked very woe-begone, and did not show at the breakfast table; whilst I, strange to relate, after having made so bad a sailor all the way from Australia, am now coming out in new colours, the wonder and envy of my companions. Since leaving Alexandria I have been as well as if on shore, and ever ready to do justice even to the greasy results of the labours of our German cook.

Our friends above presented a terribly washed out and exhausted appearance when

I first went on deck this morning; but the sun shining brightly out, and the sea going down as we got in among the beautiful isles of the Greek archipelago, they were enabled to repair damages, refit, and prepare for another night.

Two young Nubian slave girls are, for some reason, excluded from the shelter of the deck cage, outside which they lie together in a little corner near the wheel; this spot they never quit, but, nestling beneath some thick rugs and coverlets, which constitute their only defence against the rain, they remain as immoveably fixed to their appointed space as though they were chained to the deck. I have not once seen them even rise beyond a sitting posture for a single moment. From this concealment they sometimes peep cautiously out, but their bright eyes quickly disappear when they find themselves noticed. Apples or cakes, however, placed within reach are quietly drawn under cover and appropriated.

The "sunny isles of Greece"—their bold rugged shores contrasting beautifully with the green and cultivated aspect of their sloping landscapes—studded the sea, and lent an inexpressible charm and interest to our progress to-day. During the forenoon we passed Cape Crios, and before evening closed we sighted Samos.

Our captain, who is an Italian, but a most vigilant and careful seaman, expects to reach Smyrna by ten to-morrow morning.

Friday, 15th. On going upon deck at daylight found that we had already entered the Gulf of Smyrna, at the head of which the city stands. Rain fell in showers, and the louring clouds which hung about the dark summits of the mountains forming the bold and lofty shores of the Gulf, served to enhance the somewhat dreary and barren aspect consequent upon the total absence of trees upon their long unbroken slopes.

As we advanced towards Smyrna, an appearance as of white domes and cupolas rising from the watery horizon before us I

took to be a distant view of the city; but, as we proceeded, I soon became aware of my mistake, and discovered that this appearance was occasioned by numerous large heaps of salt, which during the heats of summer is collected, and thus stacked upon an extensive shoal or flat which occupies this part of the Gulf.

About ten o'clock, we came to anchor before Smyrna. From the harbour the town makes a very beautiful appearance, extending far up the steep slope of a hill of considerable elevation; the green summit crowned by the fine picturesque ruins of an old Genoese castle. Dark groves of cypress in and about the city conspicuously mark the sites of Moslem burial grounds.

Anxious to make the most of the few hours of our stay, we got on shore without loss of time, and set out to explore. The narrow streets presented a singular appearance; they are all paved with rough stones and pebbles, and in such form that the middle is the lowest part, and, owing to

the late heavy rains, streams of clear water supplied from the saturated soil of the hills above were rippling along many of these streets, giving them rather the appearance of pebbly brooks.

In the upper part of the city the streets are so steep that to render them practicable the pavement is formed into rude steps or stairs. The people are good-looking, and they, as well as the shops and bazaars, appear much cleaner and fresher than those of Egypt.

The fig season being quite over, I was disappointed in my hope to see something of the process of curing the fruit; but all the information I was enabled to gather, leads me to the conclusion that the principal cause of our want of success in all attempts at the practice of this art in Australia, is to be found in our non-possession of the proper variety of the fig-tree. I saw growing some trees that had not yet lost all their foliage, and an examination of the few remaining leaves, imper-

fect though they were, convinced me that though much resembling the variety known as the white, or *emu foot* fig in Australia, the fig-trees of Smyrna are distinct from any that I have ever met with there.

No heat but that of the sun I was assured is employed in the process of curing. The fruit is merely placed upon straw spread upon the ground among the trees from which it is produced, and when sufficiently dried, is packed into bags, and conveyed to the city. Here the figs are sorted and packed, those of the finest quality in boxes, and the inferior sorts in drums.

No sugar or syrup of any kind is used in the process, but it is considered indispensable that the sorters and packers should dip the hands frequently whilst at work into sea water, vessels filled with which, are provided for the purpose. My informant, however, admitted that this might be mere prejudice, the result of long custom; and as it appears that the hands are carefully dried after every immersion,



it seems likely that fresh water might do quite as well.

Climbing the hill to the old castle, I was well rewarded for the toil by the magnificent prospect, which on the one hand embraces the whole shores of the Gulf, the city, the harbour, and the fine plain which stretches away from beyond the head of the Gulf, and appears covered with olive groves, villas, and gardens; while on the other side the view extends over a lovely valley, with its cots and hamlets, its plantations of olive and fig-trees, and its meandering rapid stream, traced like a silver thread through the beautiful landscape, till lost in the distance among the dark mountains of the Black Cape.

In the enjoyment of such an enchanting prospect, I would fain have lingered among the ruins upon that wild hill-top, but time pressed. Ugly stories were afloat of prowling Smyrniote bandits, and the sky besides was becoming overcast and threatening. I hurried down, and had scarcely regained

the city, when the rain, descending in torrents, drove me to the friendly shelter of a light and airy, but somewhat cold looking marbled coffee shop near the port. Here I found some of my fellow-voyagers and officers of the steamboat, and after sipping a cup of hot coffee, we soon received notice to re-embark.

Returning on board at four o'clock, great was our dismay at finding the number of deck passengers increased to five hundred, and the limited space upon the quarter-deck, which had hitherto been kept clear for promenading, now completely blocked up.

The new comers are chiefly Turkish soldiers destined for the Crimea. Such a dirty set of ragamuffins was never seen; their arms and accoutrements are as clumsy and shabby-looking as themselves; altogether, their appearance is anything but efficient or formidable, and ill calculated to lessen the feelings of contempt with which we have been disposed to regard Turkish troops since the day of the battle of Bala-

klava, and the unfortunate affair of the redoubts.

At the seat of war we are assured the Turkish portion of the allied army is now only looked upon as an encumbrance and a useless drain upon the Commissariat, not likely to be compensated by any services of importance.

It was nearly six o'clock when we again got under weigh, and night closed as we returned down the Gulf. Though now almost excluded from the crowded deck, we have still the cabin to ourselves, for such Turkish officers as are among the troops are all stowed with their men. Seated on the bare decks, which they cover from stem to stern, these patiently enduring multitudes are so closely packed, that to stretch themselves at length for sleep is out of the question; they have barely space to enable them to turn, or effect a change of position. Should bad weather come on, their condition will be indeed pitiable.

My fellow-passenger, Major B——, was

unfortunately seized with a violent attack of dysentery this evening, accompanied with great pain; luckily I had a supply of laudanum with me, and the old Italian steward having rummaged out a medicine chest containing some other necessary drugs, my bush-acquired knowledge of pharmacy and the practice of medicine came advantageously into play.

## CHAPTER II.

Island of Mitylene—Tenedos—Greek Pirates—Site of Troy—Besika Bay—Mount Ida—The Dardanelles—Sestos and Abydos—Gallipoli and the Sea of Marmora—Novel Hunting Grounds—The Golden Horn—Constantinople—The Allied Fleets—Dreams and Realities—European Touters—Landing-place of Tophana—"All is not Gold that Glitters."—An Hotel and its Guests—English and French Hospitals Visited and Compared.

SATURDAY, 16th. We passed early the Island of Mitylene at some distance, and afterwards ran close along the rugged shore of Tenedos, famous for its wine, which, however, spite of its celebrity, is here obtainable at one and a-half piastres, or three-pence three-farthings, the bottle. We saw, however, no vineyards upon the side of the island along which we passed, nor any signs of cultivation: a few sheep and goats only were cropping the scanty pasture which covers the stony, barren-looking soil. The

wine is produced upon the opposite, or western, side of the island.

- Coming opposite the little town of Tenedos, which is so snugly sheltered and concealed between the heights which form its tiny bay, that we were nearly within gunshot of the landing-place and buildings before they came into view, we lay to for a short time, and received upon our overcrowded decks still more passengers, among them four Greek pirates, the most cut-throat looking ruffians I ever beheld; they were captured recently at one of the neighbouring islets, and are heavily ironed.

Upon a fine plain covered with vineyards and olive groves on the Asiatic shore, was pointed out to me the supposed site of ancient Troy; and soon after leaving Tenedos, we passed Besika Bay, now famous for that protracted sojourn and inglorious inaction of the allied fleets, which Sinope's fatal day has rendered for ever sadly memorable.

Beyond the Bay the snowy summits of Mount Ida, coldly glistening in the clear

sunlight, showed conspicuously on our right as we now rapidly approached the rugged coast of Europe, and sighted the broad imposing entrance to the famed Dardanelles.

Showing our colours as we passed those renowned castles which so long frowned defiance to the navies of the West, we ran gaily into the strait about noon. With the appearances of impregnability or strength in this celebrated passage, I must confess myself disappointed; the fortresses are placed at such considerable intervals along the shores, and the width of the channel is generally so ample, that when passing in mid-stream, the grinning tiers of guns on either shore appear to an unprofessional eye at least somewhat distant, and not so overwhelmingly formidable.

At the little town of Dardanelles we lay to for a short time, and took on board a well-dressed party of Greeks, among whom were some young women; the latter, however, provokingly hurrying to the sanctuary of

the ladies' cabin, afforded only such a transient view of their dark eyes and graceful figures, with their little gold-embroidered scarlet caps jauntily crowning the long abundant tresses, which the white veil in transparent folds covers without concealing, as made us regret that their habits were not somewhat less exclusive and retiring.

Here also the sight of some large buildings recently prepared to receive a part of the sick and wounded who now overcrowded the hospitals about Constantinople, made us feel that we are beginning to come in contact with the stern realities of the war.

Towards sunset we passed Sestos and Abydos; here the advancing shores, though increasing the force of the current, so far reduce the width of the strait, that the distance over did not strike me as anything very serious for an expert swimmer to attempt in fine weather. Yet, I must confess, that under the influence of the sharp wintry wind which this evening crisped the



blue surface of the cold, clear stream, I thought that even Leander's inducement would fail to tempt me to venture.

Before we reached Gallipoli and cleared the Dardanelles, evening had closed, and darkness remorselessly shut from our view the beautiful scenery of this famous strait, whose venerable shores present a continued succession of the most enchanting landscapes, particularly upon the long slopes of the Asiatic coast; the European side is more abrupt, and in some parts rugged and barren.

Before bed-time, we were tossing upon the short, angry waves of the boisterous little sea of Marmora. My patient has not been able to quit his berth all day, but to-night is so far convalescent, that I take some credit to myself for my success.

Sunday, 17th. At an early hour this morning, the domes and minarets of Constantinople were in sight, though yet distant.

As we approached the termination of our

voyage, the deck passengers began to get upon their legs, shake themselves, strap up their meagre amount of baggage, and prepare to land. Wonderful is the patient endurance with which these fellows have sat out the passage; but besides the never-failing chibouk, they possess another resource of a more exciting nature, which has greatly contributed to help them through the weary hours: this consists of a species of chase, the hunting grounds being the inner sides of their turbans and other habiliments; the quantity of game thus slaughtered has been immense, all available intervals between smoking and dozing having been constantly devoted to this pastime, but the supply appears to be inexhaustible.

As we drew near the head of the sea of Marmora, the rays of a bright though powerless sun gave full effect to the magnificent prospect which gradually opened before us, and when at length rounding the Seraglio Point, we entered the Golden Horn, and Constantinople in all its glory

burst upon our view, we thought all our preconceived notions and dreams of this great capital of the east seemed fully realized.

To add to the exciting interest of the scene, noble ships bearing the flags of England or France filled the harbour: some lay quietly at anchor; others, but lately arrived, were working their tortuous way through the crowded shipping; whilst many with decks thronged with soldiers, French, British, or Turkish, were getting up steam and preparing to depart. Foremost among these, the magnificent Royal Albert three-decker, with thirteen hundred troops on board, was slowly moving out into the Bosphorus, and getting under weigh to proceed to the Crimea.

Soon after the anchor dropped, my excited imagination, which had been carrying me lord knows where, among kiosks, divans, turbans, coffee and sherbet, received a check which speedily brought me back to realities, when a set of unmistak-

able touters dressed in ordinary European costume, and speaking French, rushed on deck, and besetting us with regular orthodox printed direction cards, began clamourously to urge the respective merits of the hotels they represented. Could anything be more odiously common-place and destructive of one's romantic anticipations? Thus recalled to myself, however, I remembered that, while at Alexandria, Messeri's Hôtel d'Angleterre had been recommended; so of Messeri's we now made choice.

We were quickly set ashore at the dirty landing-place of Tophana, and, our baggage packed upon the backs of sturdy Turkish porters or hummals, we went forward, winding our way through the narrow streets; we soon began to suspect that, notwithstanding the showy appearance the city makes when viewed from the water, we were destined to find in Constantinople a striking exemplification of the truth of that wise old proverb, "All is not gold that glitters."

After a long and very considerable ascent from the water, we gained the main street of Pera, and reached Messeri's, which we found to rank number one among the hotels of Constantinople, and where Major B—— and myself having obtained a double-bedded room, were assured we might consider ourselves fortunate, as the house was usually full.

Once within the doors of Messeri's, and there is little to remind you that you are in the centre of orientalism, except so far as the East is connected with the war. The host, though himself an Italian, is married to an English wife; the servants are mostly French or Italians; and the house is filled with English, chiefly officers, agents of the press, or persons whose philanthropy or public spirit has brought them out here, in the hope to effect some reformation of the abuses connected with the hospital or commissariat departments. The war, the war forms the all-engrossing topic, and I find myself at once as completely

plunged among the incidents of the campaign, as though already landed in the Crimea.

At the table d'hôte we sat down about thirty English, and three or four French, chiefly officers on sick leave from the camp, or convalescents from the hospitals. The conversation, as may be supposed, was entirely of the war, and loud were the complaints, and humiliating to one's feelings as an Englishman, the accounts of incapacity, blundering, and mismanagement pervading every department, and now causing us to stand in mortifying comparison with our French allies.

Though the little *authentic* intelligence from the camp we picked up in conversation while at Alexandria, had enabled us to perceive that all was not proceeding so gloriously as we had hoped and believed, yet we were by no means prepared for tales of such wholesale disaster and failure in everything connected with the operations of the campaign, fighting alone excepted,

as we now heard on all sides, and which emanated from sources too numerous and authentic to admit of doubt as to their correctness. For myself, I confess I went to bed to-night with a sadly altered feeling about the war, and with much less confidence than heretofore, in the ability of my country to do everything better than all the world besides.

Monday, 18th. Wishing to judge for myself of the correctness of the disparaging comparisons drawn between our hospital arrangements and those of the French, which are said to be as good as ours are faulty, I determined to visit and examine both, and began to-day with the large French hospital in Pera. An order for admission was necessary, but this was readily obtained, and the medical officer in charge very kindly conducted us over the whole establishment, pointing out and explaining everything with evident, but justifiable pride, for indeed all arrangements appeared so perfect as to leave nothing to be desired.

The iron bedsteads furnished with soft hair or wool mattresses, clean cotton sheets, blankets, coverlets, and pillows of feathers or wool, looked as comfortable as could be wished; and being placed a sufficient distance apart to allow ample space for sweeping and cleansing the stone floors between and beneath, the wards are thus kept free from offensive sights or odours, and as clean and fresh as an ordinary bedroom. At the head of each bed is affixed a small shelf, on which are placed within reach of the patient's hand his medicine cup, his knife, pipe, book, and drinking vessel, with water or other drink according to his requirements; and by the bedside hangs a cleanly-scoured board which, when the patient takes his meals, is placed upon the bed and serves for a table. At the foot of the bed, fastened upon the stump bedposts, is another wooden shelf which serves many useful purposes.

The bread baked upon the premises is of excellent quality, as are also the meats, the wine, and indeed every article of food or



consumption, all which we were invited to taste and examine.

The kitchens are perfect models of cleanliness, method, and regularity, and the cooks, as well as all other men on duty as hospital servants, being divested of their uniform coats, and habited for the nonce in clean cotton dresses, with long white aprons; this, together with the presence of the neat, grave, and gentle-looking Sisters of Charity, materially adds to the general appearance of comfort and order so conspicuous throughout the entire establishment. Among the patients we saw many who had lost legs or arms, and some poor fellows whose sunken features and upturned eyes too plainly told that they had sought glory to find death; the world with all its vain ambitions was passing from their glazing eyes; honours or disgrace, praise or censure, victory or defeat, all are now as one to them.

In one of the wards we saw a number of Russian wounded, who, our conductor assured us, are receiving the same treat-

ment as the French, and are in no way confined or under restraint. Nearly all, he added, have expressed a wish to enlist in the French army, and to be sent to Africa, where they will not come into collision with their own countrymen.

The weather to-day has been showery, bleak, and cold.

Tuesday, 19th. This day I devoted to visiting the English hospital at Scutari, on the other side of the Bosphorus, and beginning with that portion of this very extensive pile of building where the arrangements were considered most complete, I found things not quite so bad as I had been led to expect. The beds it is true are stuffed with no better material than straw, a folded great-coat serves in place of a pillow, and the convenient shelves and boards are altogether wanting. The small, deep, inconveniently shaped tin dish, in which the men receive their meals, is either placed upon the bedclothes, where it is in danger of overturning, or is set upon the floor, where, in order to get at

it, the patient must assume fatiguing and painful attitudes; but altogether there is a tolerable air of comfort. The provisions and "medical comforts" are good and abundant, and the men appear contented and well satisfied with their treatment.

Much improvement has been effected, it is said, in the condition of the hospitals within the last few weeks, attributable in a great measure to the judicious application of the large subscribed funds, and abundant contributions of every kind now pouring in upon the army from all sides, and appropriated under the active management of the *Times'* correspondent, and other gentlemen who have philanthropically devoted their time and energies to this service, and whose zeal and activity, as I have had opportunities to judge, are beyond all praise. This improved state of things is fully appreciated by the inmates of Scutari hospital, and the best feeling prevails.

In conversation with some of them I heard it said, "We now know that our

Queen and our country are mindful of us, and that we are not forgotten." "Perhaps all we have suffered could not be helped," and so on.

Some wounded men whom I spoke with heartily expressed an honourable desire to return to the Camp before Sebastopol when their wounds shall be healed; having borne their part so far in the contest, they said they would "like to see it out."

The number of patients now at Scutari alone, without reckoning the smaller establishments in the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, is no less than two thousand three hundred; and twelve hundred more, arrived yesterday and last night from Balaklava, are slowly landing in small drafts, or waiting on ship-board while accommodation is preparing for them in another part of the extensive buildings of the hospital.

Towards this other part I now wended my way, and, following a waggon coming from the commissariat store and high piled with long bags of straw intended for beds,

I presently entered a wilderness of lime heaps, mortar, tiles, beams, deal boards, shavings, and rubbish; thence, guided by a stream of hod-men, mortar-boys, and porters, I ascended a broad, dirty stair, and, amid the clang of hammers, grating of saws, shouts of workmen, and general slop and disorder, found myself at once in the wards preparing for the sick.

Here, I must admit, the state of things seemed fully to justify the worst reports. So terribly has the provision of hospital accommodation been allowed to fall in arrear of the demand that, with more than a thousand sick detained afloat waiting admission, the few hundreds landed this morning are not yet provided for; but though the day is nearly spent many of them are still sitting or lying upon the wet ground near the entrance gates.

As glaziers and plasterers are hurried from a ward, a number of the bags of straw are hastily dragged in and disposed round the damp walls upon the dirty floor. The

poor, wasted sufferers, half dead with cold, and exhausted by long waiting, are then admitted, and appear thankful to be stretched even upon this apology for a bed; the first, as some told me, they had lain upon since they quitted England.

But what a contrast between these beds and those I have described in the French hospital. The dirty, damp straw in place of hair is bad enough, but the sheets are such abominations as surely sick men were never before consigned to. Of coarse brown linen, canvass in fact, unwashed and crude as they are drawn from the bale, they unfold like maps in hard rigid squares, and when the shivering patient is placed between them lie as close and look about as comfortable as would a couple of sheets of thick cartridge paper applied to the same purpose.

To take wasted men, suffering from violent diarrhoea, strip off their woollen stockings and under clothing, and consign them to beds like these, appeared to me

little short of murder. No blanket even is placed underneath, nothing but cold canvass between the chilled victim and the dirty, damp-looking straw.

I could not help inquiring of one of the nurses why the two blankets and woollen rug were all uselessly piled outside these rigid sheets, and was answered that if placed underneath they would become soiled. Thus the washing of a blanket is, it seems, to be weighed against a man's life. Indeed, there appears to me reason to fear that these newly arrived nurses—though undoubtedly a valuable acquisition to the hospital staff—will, unless efficiently checked, be disposed to adhere too closely to routine with a view to save trouble, but at too great a sacrifice of the wants and requirements of the patients.

Much ado was made this afternoon by some of these fussy old bodies, because a number of men had, after long patient attendance, been put into the beds as they were got ready without awaiting their turn

to be previously washed, though before that turn would have arrived, to judge from appearances, exhaustion might in some instances have led to death. But Miss Nightingale is here, bringing hope to every desponding heart and assurance of the speedy reform of all these minor defects. She, with her assistants, is in this recently occupied portion of the hospital to-day, energetically combating the many graver obstacles and more serious abuses which here impede her progress towards improvement.

It was late in the afternoon when I left the hospital to return to Pera, yet so many of the sick were still waiting in the court that it appeared very doubtful whether all could be provided for before night. It might be argued that all this suffering is but the necessary consequences of the incidents and proportions of the war, were it not for the fact that the French, with a larger force in the field, are not found in this continual state of deficient preparation.



Their hospitals are ever prepared to receive the sick as they arrive, and if they are not overwhelmed with such numbers this only implies that the camp arrangements of our allies must be better than ours.

## CHAPTER III.

Disheartening Prospects—The Gloomy Bazaar—The Sloppy City—Mosque of St. Sophia—A Melancholy Hospital Spectacle—Disagreeable News from the Crimea—An Anecdote—Christmas at Constantinople—The Tar and the Pasha—A Ride in the Mud—An English Sailor's Mistake—The Sultan's New Palace.

WEDNESDAY, 20th. A dismal, wet day adds its gloomy influence to the usual melancholy which seems to pervade everything, and weigh heavily upon all sojourners in this dull city. I already begin to wish myself away, but cannot hear of any steamer being likely to proceed to Balaklava immediately. The present disheartening aspect of the war; the constant arrivals of sick and disabled in such overwhelming numbers; the certainty that yet greater sufferings must be encountered ere the severities of a Crimean winter shall be overcome; and the hopelessness of anything of importance

being achieved before the return of spring, all combine to produce a depression of spirits and positive absence of anything like gaiety, which render Constantinople just now a very undesirable place for a traveller in pursuit of amusement and pleasure.

Thursday, 21st. The same miserable weather continuing prevented our undertaking much; fortified, however, with great-coats, umbrellas, and large boots drawn over the trousers—a common peculiarity of costume here—Major B—— and myself tramped forth, crossed the Golden Horn by the pontoon bridge to Stamboul, and beguiled some hours loitering about the dark arcades of the gloomy bazaar till the bitter cold drove us home again.

Nothing can exceed the filthy muddiness of this sloppy city. It is difficult to conceive where such a perpetual supply of black mire proceeds from. The streets are all paved, though roughly, it must be confessed; and there is but small traffic of

animals or wheels. A horseman is occasionally met, clattering and stumbling over the slippery, uneven stones, and now and then an antideluvian-looking gilt carriage, drawn by a single under-sized horse, whose driver walks by his head. The transport of baggage and goods of every description is performed by the porters or hummalls, who are at all times to be seen toiling up the steep and slippery streets with trunks and carpet-bags packed upon their sturdy backs, enough to load a mule; or, in parties of four or six, staggering along under the weight of an immense cask or package slung to poles, which they bear across their shoulders.

Friday, 22nd. A dismal, sloppy day again; but the cold and cheerlessness of the common sitting room of our hotel drove us forth. Fuel is very dear, and our continual remonstrances fail to obtain anything like sufficient fires at Messeri's.

In company with my friend, Major B——, I made a visit to the Mosque of St. Sophia.

By payment of a small fee we gained admittance, though not without some little delay, for our fez caps and moustaches leading the functionary at the door to mistake us for Greeks, he would not at first let us pass; as soon, however, as he became aware that we were English, all difficulties vanished. Even taking off boots before entering a mosque is not now insisted on, provided you go furnished with clean slippers or goloshes to draw on over the boots when entering, and thus avoid defiling the pavement of the mosque with mud or dust from the street.

With the interior of St. Sophia we were disappointed. The famous porphyry columns are rather curious than beautiful, and there is a general air of nakedness and dirt.

Hearing that the fine steamship *Golden Fleece*, now lying in the Bosphorus, is ordered for the Crimea, I went this afternoon on board, and, to my great satisfaction, was informed by the captain not only that he expects to sail for Balaklava in a few

days, but what is more to the purpose, that he has little doubt of being able to give me a passage. An order from Admiral Boxer is, however, it seems, indispensable.

Saturday, 23rd. Took advantage of the fine weather—the sun having got out again at last—to make another excursion across the Bosphorus to Scutari. So rough are the waves which roll in from the sea of Marmora, that in bad weather the slender caiques, the only ferry boats here, will not venture over. Even to-day the swell was troublesome, and our caiques very anxious that we should sit still and steady.

Matters are not much improved at the hospital; hundreds of men are still on board ship waiting to be admitted, though the wards are already crowded with more than twice as many beds as the French medical officers allow in a like space; but I have been informed by the chief of the French medical staff here, that every patient in their hospitals is entitled to a specified number of cubic feet of air by positive

military regulation, and this regulation the medical officers dare not disregard. Some poor emaciated fellows just landed, whom we met painfully toiling up the hill towards the hospital gates, had been, they told us, twenty days on board.

A melancholy spectacle presented itself as we approached the hospital: numbers of thin attenuated corpses, sewed up in blankets, were passing, borne upon stretchers towards the adjacent burial ground by a party of Turkish labourers, whose chattering and laughter, as they hurried along with rapid step, seemed to indicate but little sympathy with the sufferings of their Christian friends, and increased the saddening influence of the scene.

Sunday, 24th. So short are now the wintry days, and so dark and cold the mornings and evenings, that really night comes round again before one has time to achieve anything. To-day I accomplished nothing beyond a short walk of a mile or two upon the bleak, uncultivated hills in the

outskirts of the city. Even there the sight of a newly formed burial ground, with long rows of yawning graves prepared to receive the dead from the French hospital, denied all escape from the usual course of melancholy reflection. A few stolid-looking Turks, draggled and bedaubed with mire, were engaged in filling the soddened earth into such of these wet, dismal-looking, last-resting-places as had already received their inmates.

I was glad to get back to the table d'hôte at our hotel, for, with all the drawbacks to cheerfulness, here at least there is always enough of novelty and interest to render the evenings in some measure agreeable. Nearly every day our dinner party is varied by the disappearance of well-known faces and the arrival of new, coming not only from the Crimea and England but from all parts of the world besides; thus we hear all that passes in every quarter.

Some invalided officers arrived from the Camp to-day, bring intelligence of a



description far from agreeable. The cold, it appears, in addition to other hardships, is now telling upon the troops to such a degree that the men cannot be kept sufficiently alert, or sometimes even awake, in the advanced trenches; and the enemy, profiting by this state of things, succeeded a few nights since in taking a party of the 50th so completely by surprise that, entering the trench with the bayonet, they succeeded in killing and wounding above a score of men, Major Möller among the number, and carrying off as prisoners Captain Frampton and Lieutenant Clarke, with eight or ten men, before they were checked and driven back by the 34th. A few nights previously a similar attack had been made with equal success upon the trenches of our allies; the Russians on that occasion succeeded in carrying off three small guns.

An anecdote of a less unpleasant nature, related to me by an officer of the 79th, seems so illustrative of the state of things

in the Càmp, that I will here repeat it. My informant was coming into Balaklava late one afternoon, when he observed a poor fellow who had passed the previous night in the trenches, struggling through the deep mire under the weight of fourteen rations of salt pork, which he had to carry up to the Camp, four or five miles distant. Rain was falling at the time in torrents, and the man, not perceiving that anybody was within hearing, was consoling himself with the following soliloquy:—"Well, if ever I gets back to England again, the first time I meets one of them hurdy-gurdy beggars a singing, 'Britons never, never shall be slaves,' d—n me, if I don't punch his head."

Monday, 25th. There is little to remind one of merry Christmas; no signs of feasting or jollity, except that more than the ordinary number of tipsy sailors are to be seen dancing in the streets, and indulging in various frolics, to the great scandal of the sober Turks, who look on with a

mingled expression of amusement and contempt. Many are the outrages against Moslem propriety which these most eccentric of beings—British sailors—have perpetrated since the fleet first anchored in the Bosphorus. They have been known to carry frolic so far, as to stop carriages filled with hareem beauties, and jumping in to seat themselves among the ruffled fair ones. And on one occasion, we were informed by an eye-witness, as a solemn, gray-bearded Pasha, mounted upon a richly caparisoned steed, and followed at a respectful distance by his swarthy attendant, was pacing along the main street of Pera, a half-drunken tar dashed at him, and, with a running jump, perched himself behind the saddle, then seizing the astonished Turk by the beard with both hands, so that he could not turn even to see his assailant, Jack plied his heels, and set the horse into a gallop.

If all else be wanting, the weather, at any rate, is quite Christmas-like, cold and

wintry enough to admit of any amount of blazing hearths and smoking sirloins. Determined, however, to make an effort to see something of the surrounding country, I engaged a saddle-horse, the charge for which was seven shillings in English money, and set out to face the cold north wind, drizzle, and sleet. I took the road to Therapia, which follows the heights upon the European shore of the Bosphorus; I was no sooner off the pavement which extends a little beyond the bounds of the city, than the road became a perfect slough of yellow clay, so deep, that in many parts my horse could with difficulty struggle through it. Hoping matters might improve, however, I pushed on.

To my surprise, I found the country quite wild and uncultivated, except along the short abrupt slopes to the Bosphorus shore; all in the rear of these is wild heath, and very much broken by deep gulleys and ravines. Much of the cultivated land is devoted to growing strawberries, of

which I saw many large fields during my ride.

In another field I found a Turkish husbandman at work, planting wheat. His plough was quite as rude as those of Egypt, from which, indeed, it differed only in being fitted with a short spur, or stump of wood, to serve in a sort of way the purposes of a mouldboard.

Entering the field, I remained for awhile to observe how this rude implement performed its work, and to admire the extreme docility of the pair of small oxen, which, guided by reins, seemed as obedient and tractable as the steadiest horses.

While thus engaged, a couple of English sailors came up along the road, mounted on ponies, and as gay and full of spirits as Jack is wont to be on such occasions; they no sooner espied me riding beside the plough, than, speaking in a broad Somersetshire dialect, one cried out—"Hulloa, here's a varmer!" And then addressing his companion, he continued—"I zay, Joe,

this *is* English though, arn't it? Here's an oud varmer out a viewin is ground; yes, he's a ridin round to view is ground, but he've got too good a zuit a clothes of is back, though." With this critical remark, the two jogged on in search of fresh wonders, and never doubting they had seen a real live Turkish farmer; and their friends at home will, no doubt, hear in due time how they saw a farmer in Turkey riding round his ground for all the world like an English farmer, only that he carried a red figure-head.

After splashing and labouring on a few miles further without finding much improvement in the state of the road, at about eight miles from Constantinople I turned off upon a track which led by numerous windings down the heights to the water side. Here I found a paved way running close along the shore of the Bosphorus, and leading apparently towards Pera, and having had enough of the quagmire, called a road, on the heights above, I

resolved to follow this, and take my chance, though directions I could get none, not understanding Turkish, and the Turks being particularly dull at comprehending signs.

Owing to the wind having gone round to the north, after blowing for some time from the opposite direction, the current which constantly flows from the Black Sea through the Bosphorus is running to-day with so much force, that it is with difficulty boats can be pulled against it. No description can do justice to the scenery of this beautiful strait, whose waters are bordered with numerous villages, forts, palaces, and mosques, and whose lofty, sloping shores are covered with mansions, hanging gardens, orchards, and cypress-groves. The fertile banks, the absence of tides, and the rapid stream, impart to the Bosphorus quite the appearance of a broad freshwater river.

The paved road, or street I ought rather to call it, as it passes between continuous

rows of houses throughout nearly its whole extent, led me, as I anticipated, back to the city; but before entering Tophana, finding myself before the open gates of the Sultan's new palace, I turned my horse, and was riding through, when I was stopped by a cawass, who, however, most good-humouredly gave me to understand by signs, that, although inadmissible on horseback, I might proceed on foot; he, moreover, gave my nag to the porter to hold, and I immediately set off through the garden to the principal entrance of the palace: here I was met by another functionary, who spoke French, and who led me all over the unoccupied parts of the building. Many of the principal apartments are not yet completed, but enough is done to show that when finished the interior of the palace will be of surpassing magnificence.

The grand vestibule is strikingly beautiful, extending through the entire height of the building to the lofty dome; and the



light being admitted from above through pink stained glass, tints with a delicate rose-colour the white marbles of the interior, thus producing a superb and most enchanting effect.

Notwithstanding the extremely unpromising appearance of the morning, the day, though very cold, proved rather fine. During the afternoon the sun shone out for awhile; and when, as evening approached, I rejoined my friends at the hotel, I felt well pleased with my day's excursion.

The English hostess, English pretensions of the house, and abundance of English guests, considered, the attempted imitation of English Christmas fare at the table d'hôte to-night was not very creditable. The glorious sirloin was miserably represented by some wretched slices of beef; and a sorry composition of plums and paste did duty for a Christmas pudding. However, I must do Messeri's the justice to say that the usual fare is by no means

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bad; the fish is good, and we have always a liberal third course of game, venison, wild boar, hare, snipe, or woodcock, with all of which the markets here are remarkably well supplied. The butcher's meat of Constantinople is, however, nearly as bad as that of Egypt; the cause being, I fancy, in both cases sufficiently explained by the fact, that a certain mode of treating the male animals, by us considered essential, is among these Orientals dispensed with.

## CHAPTER IV.

Forbearance of Turkish Police—French Hospital at Seraglio Point—Russian Wounded—Hall of Audience of the Sultans—Burning of an English Transport Ship—Turkish Ladies—Ugliness of Women of the Lower Class—Admiral Boxer—Embarkation for the Crimea.

TUESDAY, 26th. Last night it appears our jolly tars, in the exuberance of their Christmas humour, carried their practical joking beyond the point of Turkish, or, at any rate, of Greek endurance; and several were stabbed and badly wounded during the evening. The Turkish police have all along shown the greatest forbearance and reluctance to curb even the most extravagant frolics of the Sultan's allies; one incident connected with last night's irregularities is, therefore, the more to be regretted.

A row between some natives and soldiers assuming an unusually angry and serious

aspect, a policeman, or cawass, felt constrained to interfere, when a French soldier, savagely making a thrust at him with his sword, dug an eye completely from the socket. Even under this provocation, the poor cawass, though well armed, was able to restrain his temper, and merely disarming the Frenchman, he turned away without seeking retaliation or vengeance.

It is said that the allies are about to establish a police force in Constantinople, to restrain the vagaries of their own men; and assuredly this unfortunate occurrence goes far to prove the necessity of such a measure.

Our own sailors conducted their proceedings, if not with more discretion, at least with better temper. A party of them having been turned out of a Greek drinking shop in a manner which gave them offence, they set off to beat up recruits. Headed by their boatswain with his pipe, they paraded the streets, and speedily

collected fifty or sixty hands belonging to different ships in the port. Thus reinforced, they returned to the scene of action, and the boatswain having piped all hands to quarters, shouted with stentorian lungs —“ All hands down house!” and forthwith down the house came accordingly.

Among the most agreeable incidents of my sojourn here, I may reckon the having made acquaintance with the Rev. Mr. B——r, brother of the brave defender of Silistria.

The weather being unusually fine to-day, he and I, with Major B——, set off for a rambling, sight-seeing expedition across the Golden Horn, and about the quarter of the old Seraglio. Here the French are constructing an extensive range of wooden buildings for hospitals, in a fine airy situation, at Seraglio Point, formerly a part of the Seraglio Gardens. We went through some of the buildings which are already occupied, and found all as well ordered apparently as in the main hospital at Pera.

The mortality is said to be now much greater in our hospitals than in those of the French. If the figures given us by their chief medical officer be correct, which I cannot doubt, it would appear that out of a given number of sick we lose near twice as many as the French do. This difference, it is thought, is mainly attributable to our system of overcrowding.

We saw several Russians again to-day among the wounded; they, for the most part, wore a very sullen and dejected expression: one old gray-headed man tells that he has served more than thirty years in the armies of the Czar. Nearly all the men in the wards we visited are from the battle-field of Inkermann, and a large proportion of them have lost arms or legs by cannon-shot.

Among the old Seraglio buildings we were shown the ancient Hall of Audience of the Sultans. It is a small detached building, kept doubly locked and bolted; and to gain admittance we had to pay a .

pretty large fee, and to wait besides while a written permit was procured from some functionary, whose title I forget.

After all there was not much to see within. The ancient throne, or divan, much resembles a large brass four-post bedstead; the corners, or posts, and other prominent parts, are rather finely chased, and studded with stones of various colours; many of these have been picked out and purloined.

Near the door of this chamber when we first approached we met a couple of French naval officers who had failed to gain admittance, being unwilling, I fancy, to pay the required fee; they were in great wrath.

"Attendons," one of them exclaimed, "encore un an et ces messieurs la demandrons de nous tous ces permissions!"

This is not the only occasion on which I have heard like sentiments expressed by the French since I came to Constantinople.

An English transport ship, freighted with stores for the Crimea, was burned to-day in the Bosphorus. She was on fire at an

early hour this morning, and could be seen from the upper windows of our hotel. Smoke only was then issuing from the fore-hatch, and her deck was covered with men from a perfect fleet of boats that had come to her aid. Yet with all this assistance the fire could not be subdued; and the unfortunate vessel was ultimately towed clear of the shipping into shallow water, and there scuttled; her masts and rigging made a splendid illumination when the fire caught them; she is now burned to the water's edge. It is reported that a part of the cargo consisted of warm clothing for the army.

Admiral Dundas has arrived *en route* to England, leaving Sir E. Lyons in command. The change is hailed by all here as an event full of promise as regards the future operations of the Black Sea Fleet.

Though the sun shone brightly to-day, the air was very cold and piercing.

Wednesday, 27th. Mr. R——, British



Consul at Tangier, quitting Constantinople to-day, and leaving behind him his horse to be disposed of, I have arranged to have the use of the animal by merely paying the livery charges till he shall be sold, and as the horse is a very good one, I am well pleased with my bargain.

Horses, like all other things here, have greatly risen in price since the arrival of the allied forces in the Bosphorus, and they are now as dear and bad as they are said to have been good and cheap some months ago. A good nag, I am told, could then be obtained for six or seven pounds, now treble that sum is asked for an inferior animal.

For the first time since I passed the Dardanelles the sun to-day shone brightly from his rising to his going down. Such weather was not to be slighted; so, mounted upon my newly-acquired nag, I again crossed the Golden Horn by one of its three bridges, and spent the whole day exploring the narrow streets and thronged

bazaars of Stamboul, the Turkish portion of the city.

The sunshine had brought out the ladies of the hareems. I saw many in the bazaars, and met several carriages, each generally containing four of the veiled fair ones; among the Turks, men are never seen in the same carriage with ladies. I thought the beauty of several very great; and its effect rather heightened than otherwise by the white yashmack, or mask, which, under the operation of modern progress and reform, has been reduced to a texture so delicate and web-like, as to be quite transparent.

The Turkish ladies would, in my opinion, show little wisdom should they attempt to carry innovation further: their eyes, which are magnificent, gain by being the only features unveiled, while the lower parts of the face, which are often coarse, are softened by the partial concealment. In a general way, I think the reputation for beauty of the women of Constantinople has been greater than they deserve.

The most beautiful female children in the world are to be seen here; but after their precocious early youth is past, the figures of the women are heavy and ungraceful—large hands, with coarse ankles and feet, appearing to be the rule. The latter defects are rendered more conspicuous by the shapeless, ungainly, yellow leather boots, almost as high as Wellingtons, worn by the females when abroad. Added to all this, whether the effect of their frequent use of the hot bath, of their sedentary and indoor life, or of the climate, it is certain that the Turkish women, high and low, generally show a sickly, yellow tinge in their complexion, which greatly detracts from the beauty of the most handsome among them.

Numbers of the women of the inferior classes, who are to be met in the streets of Stamboul, are disgustingly ugly, fat, yellow, and flabby; with slipshod feet they waddle along, the most unpleasing specimens of womankind ever beheld.

Thursday, 28th. I have made several ineffectual attempts to see Admiral Boxer, but have hitherto found him either "gone out," or already engaged, and besides so deeply bespoken by an impatient crowd of sea captains and naval officers, that to wait till *my* turn should arrive seemed a hopeless undertaking. To-day I was, however, fortunate enough to catch him at last, and my business was soon settled, much to my satisfaction, by his giving me an order for a passage in the Golden Fleece to Balaklava. After all that I had heard of the irascible temper and unceremonious style of the gallant Admiral, the kindness of his manner and the obliging way in which he met my wishes were an agreeable surprise. The only difficulty was one that I ought to have foreseen: I ought to have felt aware that when thus asking to be carried to the Allied camps, it would be necessary that I, a perfect stranger, should produce *some* credentials, yet had I come without introduction, and unprepared with any reference.

This difficulty was, however, soon removed by the appearance of my friend, Mr. B——, who, in his clerical capacity, has recently received an appointment in the Camp, and is also seeking a passage to the Crimea.

If some of the numerous applicants, whose wants, wishes, or requirements Admiral Boxer is so incessantly called upon to attend to occasionally, meet with rough answers, or hear language abhorrent to ears polite, the following anecdote, I think, helps to prove that it is not always that gallant officer who is to blame. A few days ago a gentleman who had occasion to proceed to Balaklava, called at the office to obtain the necessary order for a passage. He found Admiral Boxer engaged; but, as he pleaded the urgency of his business, the gentleman, who is a clergyman, was admitted, his application heard, and the required order given; preparing to leave he had reached the door when, bethinking himself of his horse, he turned back to ask a passage for that also.

This second interruption the Admiral still patiently endured; the necessary paper was signed and given, and the gentleman made his bow and departed; an instant afterwards, however, the door again opened, and the same gentleman reappeared to ask the Admiral if he could give any idea when *Sebastopol was likely to fall!!* What human patience could stand this? The clergyman, as may be imagined, found it advisable to beat a speedy retreat, and has been since heard to complain that Admiral Boxer uses language too forcible, not to say profane, for pious lips to repeat.

From the Admiral's office Mr. B—— and myself hurried off with all speed to the Golden Fleece, and were just in time to secure the last cabin, containing two berths. The ship is quite full; besides the 39th regiment, recently arrived from Gibraltar, she has on board drafts for different regiments serving in the Crimea, and three hundred convalescents from Scutari, in all fifteen hundred men. In the cabin there

are some fifty officers, and a few others, who have obtained orders for passages like ourselves.

The vessel is to sail early to-morrow, and as the fair weather continues we have every hope of a fine passage.

## CHAPTER V.

Under Weigh for Balaklava—Serious Result of Want of Method—General Complaints of Inaction before Sebastopol—The Bay of Balaklava—The Harbour and its Entrance—View of the Allied Camps—Timely Discovery of a Relative—A Foot Ramble to the Camps—A Sight of the Cossacks.

FRIDAY, 29th. Packed up and got on board about noon, and, as the anchor was soon afterwards hove up, we were congratulating ourselves upon the prospect of viewing the fine scenery of the Bosphorus under the advantage of the bright sunshine with which we were again favoured to-day. In this, however, we were doomed to be disappointed, for just as we were about to move, as if to afford us a sample of the irregular and unmethodical mode in which these matters are conducted here, a barge came alongside laden with more than a hundred bales of fur coats for the army, and with orders that they should be forthwith taken on board.



The captain, angry that so large a quantity of cargo should thus have been sent at the last moment, ordered that the barge should be made fast alongside, and proceeded to work his ship out of the crowd of vessels among which she was moored.

This operation consumed much time, during which the barge and the fur coats appeared to be forgotten, for after a great deal of going ahead, backing astern, warping and turning, we had just got clear out into the rapid stream of the Bosphorus, and were advancing under full steam when, hearing a loud crashing alongside, we looked over and saw that one of the ship's life-boats, which was also towing, had by some entanglement been turned bottom upwards upon the barge, across which it was now dragging, breaking the lashings, and tumbling the high-piled bales into the water. To make matters worse the barge broke adrift, and borne by the strong current was carried rapidly away, floating amid the

immersed bales like a duck surrounded by her young ones.

Great and most discreditable confusion followed, boats put off without sufficient oars or men, and so much time was wasted before any efficient measures were adopted that two hours had elapsed ere the barge was again alongside, and one of the floating bales was allowed to sink and was lost altogether.

In consequence of this mishap it was near sunset ere the coats were all shipped, and the boats hoisted in. We therefore passed through the Bosphorus in the dark, much to our disappointment.

Saturday, 30th. The morning came in wet, cold, and dismal, and found us out of sight of land, and slowly progressing across the Black Sea. The wind, dead against us, is light fortunately, for the auxiliary steam-power of the *Golden Fleece*—only three hundred horse—is not sufficient to enable so large a vessel to make head against a strong wind; as it is, our speed does not exceed five to six knots.

A great part of the crew has been employed all day unpacking the saturated fur coats, and rinsing them in fresh water; they are now hung all over the quarter rails and rigging, imparting a rather laundry-like appearance to the ship's decks.

We sat down to dinner this evening about fifty strong; the sea being tolerably smooth, and the ship so large, there is no motion to disturb the tenderest stomach, and all answered the summons of the dinner-bell. The officers of all ranks and ages are a good deal depressed and out of spirits with the prospects before them—a prospect of discomfort, privation, and suffering for all, and of sickness and death for many, without any immediate promise of compensation in the shape of a fair field for honour and distinction.

In the newly arrived regiments at the Camp the mortality is now the greatest. The 89th, which left Gibraltar for the seat of war only a week before the 39th, is already reported to have lost one officer and

fifty men dead, and a hundred and fifty sick, though they have not yet had an opportunity to pull a trigger.

General are the complaints that inaction is murdering the army, and one constantly hears expressed the belief that would the Generals only accede to the unanimous wish of every soldier in the Camp, and order the assault without further preparation, Sebastopol would fall, at a cost of much blood without doubt; but then all say, Better that a few thousands of us should thus die than that the whole army should rot away in trenches and hospitals, without achievement and without renown. Such is now the want of confidence in the ability of the commanders, so frequent the instances of blundering incompetency in the commissariat and other departments, and so general the apprehension that the insufficiency of all arrangements will prove the cause of more wholesale disaster before the winter can be got through, that a gloomy feeling of doubt—I may almost say despondency—

is becoming everywhere apparent, depressing the most light-hearted, and filling the most resolute with anxious forebodings.

Our progress throughout the day has been so slow that, unless favoured with a change of wind, we have small hope, our captain tells us, of reaching Balaklava to-morrow.

Sunday, 31st. When we got on deck this morning, we were agreeably surprised to find that, owing to a change of wind during the night, we had made such good progress that the bold rocky coast of the Crimea was already in sight, and at no great distance. The sky was clear, and the snow which capped all the heights along the shore, showed cold and bright under the rays of the early sun.

Scattered over the sea, ten or twelve sail could be counted, and a huge leviathan steamer was crossing astern of us, coming from the French port of Kamiesch, and steering in the direction of Sinope. Right ahead lay the bay of Balaklava; but so

narrow is the entrance to the harbour that although we were now no more than three or four miles distant it was not yet visible, the lofty cliffs appearing to form an unbroken and continuous barrier.

As we neared the shore, however, the position of the opening was disclosed by the appearance of a small steamer, which suddenly passed out as if from the face of the rock; and anon, gradually disclosing her interminable length, an immense steamship also came slowly forth into view, dragged from this same invisible hiding-place, in tow of the little tug.

As we approached the cliffs, we could see piled up all along their base great heaps and ridges of splintered wood, the awful vestiges of the tempest and wrecks of the 14th ultimo.

The little tug having safely disposed of her large friend, which proved to be the Jason, now came to conduct us in, and never surely was seen a craft doing duty in such a dilapidated condition—her paddle-boxes

smashed and gone, stern crushed out of all shape, figure-head wanting, and cutwater demolished, she seemed a most appropriate messenger to introduce us to the scenes of destruction we were about to enter.

Dashing boldly up, her naked paddle-wheels making a great disturbance, she ran alongside, took a hawser on board, and went ahead, but with the first pull the rope parted, and ere she could again make fast, a brig showing Genoese colours had passed ahead of us, and got into the entrance. Here the tall cliffs taking the wind out of her sails, she became unmanageable, and was drifting upon the rocks, when the busy little steamer casting us off again hurried away to the rescue, took her in tow, and the two speedily vanished between the cliffs.

We had now ample opportunity to survey the disastrous bay of Balaklava, lately the grave of so many gallant ships. The so-called bay is merely a very slight indentation in an iron-bound shore, with deep

water, and a rocky, bad bottom. Yet it was here that, with sheet and bower-anchors lost, and only a small stream-anchor remaining, the luckless steam-ship, Prince, with her immense cargo of warm clothing and hospital stores—things at the time of such inestimable value to the army—was compelled to remain day after day till the tempest came, and this notwithstanding the frequently urged request of her commander to be allowed either to enter the harbour, or, at any rate, to quit his dangerous position, and keep out at sea until he could be admitted. A little to the right of the entrance to the harbour was pointed out to us the spot where this magnificent vessel drove upon the rocks; the stupendous cliffs are here not perpendicular merely, but absolutely caverned under and overhanging; and the ship is said to have disappeared within two minutes after she struck.

Having made several turns up and down the bay, vainly awaiting the return of our



small friend the tug, the captain at length began to share the impatience of his passengers, and resolved to attempt the entrance unassisted. Steering boldly into the deep but narrow channel, in a few minutes we reached the sharp turn which at once constitutes the difficulty of the entrance, and adds to the shelter and security of the harbour. Safely passing this corner, we immediately found ourselves among such a crowd of vessels as nearly filled the docklike little port, whose waters, though not half a mile long, and in width less than twice the length of our ship, are very deep; and so bold are the shores, that ships of large tonnage may almost rub their sides against the rocks. About seventy vessels, mostly large ones, including twenty great steamers, are now packed in this limited space.

After some delay and manœuvring, the Golden Fleece having been backed into a narrow opening and moored, I got ashore; and impatient to look about me, made my

way at once through the deep mire and sloughs of Balaklava, and gaining the stony heights which hem in the village, I pushed forward to climb as far as the approach of evening would allow.

The view which opened to me when I reached the summit of the first hill well repaid me for my toil. Far above, at a height of some one thousand six hundred feet in the rear of Balaklava, and near the cliffs which overlook the bay, could be seen the tents and huts of the Marines dotted over the snow, which still lay unmelted in those upper regions. Below these is a camp of Turks; and lower still, upon the same hills, a force of Zouaves and the 79th Highlanders encamped together; the Zouaves take mightily to their kilted allies, who they call *Zouaves Ecossais*. More to the left, in the direction of Sebastopol, is the camp of the 18th, recently arrived; their tents are pitched upon a long, muddy slope, and look dismal in the extreme. A little to the right of these is

another Turkish camp pitched in a perfect marsh; and thence the eye can trace cavalry camps, French and Turks, extending away to the heights occupied by the main body of the besieging army.

Beyond those heights the occasional booming of cannon indicates the position of the doomed city, and tells that though the work of death now languishes, it is not entirely stayed.

Balaklava is but a miserable village of small, mean buildings, mostly constructed of rough stones, with tiled roofs, and occupying a narrow slip of sloping ground, enclosed between precipitous, stony hills and the waters of the harbour. The only egress on the land side is by a narrow pass between the water and the rocks, which towards the upper end of the harbour approach close to the shore. At the foot of these rocks issues a fine copious spring of excellent water, in ample abundance for the supply of the town, shipping, and every other purpose,

Night closing in by the time I had seen thus much, I returned on board the Golden Fleece.

Monday, January 1st, 1855. Last night I learned that the Medway steamer, commanded by a relative, is among the ships in the harbour. I, therefore, sought her out this morning, and went on board. My cousin, whom I now meet for the first time, received me most hospitably, giving me a warm, snug cabin, and the use of a pony to make my projected excursions to the camp, so I am now comfortably provided for, and already quite at home in this out-of-the-way place. This seems really a Godsend, for I was unaware that I had any friend in the Crimea, and lodging is not to be had for money. I might have arranged with the steward to remain in the Golden Fleece so long as she stays, but she is much crowded and very comfortless.

After removing my traps to the Medway, I set out in company with Mr. G——d, a young fellow-passenger, for a day's ramble

on foot; the day being too far advanced to allow of an excursion to the "front," we resolved to devote the afternoon to an exploration of the camps nearer at hand upon the heights.

After a rather fatiguing ascent, we reached the Marines' encampment; the snow had disappeared, and the camp when approached looked more comfortable than at a distance. Most of these men have housed themselves in little huts, excavated in the dry hillside, and roofed over with timber and pieces of sail-cloth, the *debris* of the wrecks below; earth is again heaped over all, and the huts being furnished besides with ingeniously-contrived little fireplaces with mud chimneys, they are tolerably warm and comfortable, forming a far better defence than the most perfect tent against the piercing blasts which sweep over this highland camp.

Leaving the Marines, we passed the trench which defends the outside of their position, and proceeded along the heights

about a mile towards a picquet of Rifles, occupying the most advanced post upon this side. Here we were warned to go no further, as Cossacks were upon the next ridge, and an over-adventurous explorer had been carried off by them this morning before the eyes of the Riflemen, whose shouts and warnings to turn back were unheeded or unheard.

Scrambling through the low scrub of dwarf oaks, we ascended to the hilltop occupied by the sentries of the Rifles, and from thence could plainly discern the Cossacks, some prowling about among the bushes like hungry wolves, whilst others sat beside their dark steeds sheltering themselves from the bitter wind. A rather deep ravine separated them from our Riflemen, but they were not beyond the range of a Minié ball.

Having brought a well-stored haversack with us, we now lighted a fire, and prepared some chocolate, which, with biscuit, delicious figs which I procured at Smyrna,

and a drop of brandy for a finish, we discussed with an appetite such as is known only to those who inhale the keen air of the mountains.

While we were thus engaged, a little excitement was occasioned by one of the sentries on the watch coming down to say that he thought the Cossacks were "going to try a shot at us," as he could "see their rifle barrels gleaming as though levelled;" no shot came, however, though we did not budge from our fireside.

Before setting out on our return, we emptied our haversack of its remaining contents, and the eager way in which these were appropriated by our friends the Riflemen, seemed to show that the cold, bracing, hungry wind, and a soldier's ration, were not quite in harmony and accordance with each other.

As we descended the hill towards Bala-klava, the red glow of the setting sun gave promise of fine weather for to-morrow.

## CHAPTER VI.

The Mud of Balaklava—Want of Method and Management—French Opinion of the British—A Journey to the “Front”—Weariness of Inaction—A Sea of Mire—Miseries of Tent Life—Full View of Sebastopol—The Fleet at Watch.

TUESDAY, 2nd. To our great disappointment rain came on during the night, and fell heavily, and the weather looks so threatening this morning that I am again compelled to defer my intended excursion to the lines before Sebastopol. The condition of Balaklava, bad enough yesterday, is ten times worse now. Mud in every form of liquid nastiness pervades, disfigures, and destroys everything; men and animals are daubed and bespattered with mud; bags of grain, trusses of hay, and packages of all sorts, are tumbled in the mud; bales of clothing, and bags of biscuit, are sopping in the rain. Packhorses, unskilfully loaded,



are hardly started before their loads turn and come down into the mud.

Want of skill, want of method, and want of arrangement, are obvious everywhere, even in the most simple matters. The canal of mud, called the main street, by which all the packhorses and all the ammunition waggons pass, is in one part covered with a deep layer of iron hoops, the residue of the beef casks which are opened near that spot; and in the little square where the horses and mules are assembled, awaiting their turn to be loaded, the animals sink above their knees in an accumulation of mud, rotten straw, iron hoops, and broken glass bottles, which it appears may be here scattered about without let or hindrance. To complete the perfect arrangements of this yard, a dead horse lies putrefying in the mud before the shed, which contains a quantity of half-rotten fodder, wherewith the wretched brutes are fed.

In the harbour, moored to the bank, lies

a large boat, or lighter, high piled with bales of warm clothing and fur coats, which, without covering or protection of any kind, are soddening and sopping beneath every shower that falls, though the Medway, not a hundred yards distant, is partly loaded with tarpaulings for the use of the army. The lighter and the bales were, I am assured too, exactly in their present position a week ago. Such are a few samples of the mode in which things are conducted, or, I should rather say, go on, in this chaotic place, where there seems to be neither head to devise, nor authority to direct.

I spent the morning picking my way among the sloughs and mire of Balaklava, and looking on in astonishment at the wonderful disorder. I stood some time beside the *bed* of hoops, watching the numbers of horses that got their legs entangled, were nearly thrown down, and went limping away, and wondering why the hoops had not been thrown into the water rather than on

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to the road. Not a horse came up that did not shy and hold back, loth to trust his legs among this maze of crooked iron.

Of the waggons passing out, loaded with mud-coated shells and mire-stained packages, the greater part to-day are French; and it is mortifying to observe how superior in condition are their horses to ours. Our allies are now doing much of our land transport work for us, carrying ammunition and supplies up to the camp, and bringing our sick down. They begin to look upon us as good only for pluck, and wanting in all the other qualities necessary for soldiers. Indeed, they do not hesitate to say—"You fight best of any men in the world, but you can't see before your noses; you don't know how to campaign."

Having seen enough of Balaklava, I set out in company with my companion of yesterday for a ramble on the heights upon the opposite side of the harbour, intending to visit the Monastery of St. George; but the rain increasing to a perfect deluge, we were early driven in again.

During our walk we fell in with several small parties, both French and English, collecting sticks for fuel, or brushwood to cover the marshy floors of their tents. The English seemed much disheartened with their miseries and tedious inaction. One Irish youth belonging to the 18th, with whom we talked for a while, imparted to us with an air of great mystery, that the "min had their minds med up," if not soon led to the assault, to turn out and storm Sebastopol on their own account, the Guards, he added, having volunteered to lead.

The French, who were principally Zouaves, appeared quite brisk and cheerful; nothing seems to daunt the spirits of these fellows, who run and skip over the mud without getting themselves bedaubed and draggled as our men do, and whilst our soldiers starve and shiver in their tents, the Zouaves construct for themselves warm snug burrows underground, forage and plunder to supply the pot, and are as jolly

and contented as our fellows are depressed and miserable.

Wednesday, 3rd. When I awoke this morning, I found snow falling heavily, and all looking most gloomy and cheerless; and when on board the Golden Fleece close by, God Save the Queen was struck up by the band of the 39th, the effect was rather depressing than otherwise, it seemed so forced and hopeless an effort at cheerfulness. Those poor fellows must soon be landed, and then their ranks will be speedily thinned by the miseries and sufferings of the camp. Two of their number died on board of cholera yesterday, although their hardships have not yet begun.

After breakfast, though rather late, the sun breaking out, I resolved to make an attempt to get out to the front, and mounted on the pony furnished me by my kind host, I set out. Once clear of the rocky heights that surround the harbour of Balaklava, I found myself embarked upon

a sea of mire: prepared as I had been by my two days' sojourn here, to meet with mud in every variety and condition, I yet found the reality far exceed my anticipations. The entire surface of the country from Balaklava to the lines before Sebastopol, is one vast quagmire of dark, greasy soil, worked, kneaded, and tortured into every variety of adhesive mud. In many places my horse sank to the hocks, and could with difficulty extricate himself; yet it is through this that all things required for the army must be conveyed six or seven miles by a set of miserable mules and horses, starved and wasted to the last degree.

In the midst of this ocean of slough the tents of the grand camp are pitched, and the whole army lives and moves ankle deep in mire. Within the tents, the surface having been generally paved, or rather Macadamized with broken stone, the mud is less deep, but still the frequent ingress of the twelve or fourteen men who are

crowded into each of these dismal, mouldy dwellings, unavoidably produces a thick coating of mud, and upon this the men sit and sleep, without anything in shape of a bed, beyond a damp, mire-stained blanket, and the draggled great coat, in which they return from the trenches.

In the British cavalry camps the condition of the wretched horses is distressing to behold, as they stand shaking and trembling, fastened in long rows in the open air, water reaching above their fetlocks, and rain, sleet, and snow pelting upon their unprotected backs. The cloth with which each horse is furnished, is not unfrequently hanging beneath his belly, or even lying in the wet underneath his feet. Even officers' horses suffer the same neglected fate; they are to be seen beside their masters' tents, tied to stakes, round which they have been left to work, till they have sunk themselves to the knees, though it would not require two minutes' exertion to remove them to new and comparatively

firm ground. Horses dead and dying are lying all along the line of road, and in every bog and water-course between the camp and Balaklava. A remorseless order from head-quarters, it seems, forbids giving the *coup de grace* to these luckless creatures, however hopelessly worn out or disabled, and they are thus left to die by inches where they fall, or become bogged. So pitiable was the state of some of the struggling, wretched animals that I came upon during my progress, that despite orders and regulations, I could not pass on and leave them in their agony.

As I approached the front, so thick a snow-storm came on, that it was with difficulty I could find my way forward, but at the moment of reaching the point to which I was directed—an unarmed redoubt, occupied by a picquet of about twenty men—the sun by great good fortune burst suddenly forth again, and I found myself in full view of Sebastopol, with all the besieging works. The town, I thought, ap-



peared in a wonderful state of preservation, considering all the pounding and injury said to have been inflicted upon it by the allied batteries.

Away to the left, the French were sending a shell every few minutes into the town from their advanced works, which are very much nearer those of the enemy than any of ours. Some of these shells burst in the air, and the effect was then very beautiful.

To the right, on the heights beyond the Inkermann Valley, a large Russian camp was quite conspicuous, with its long lines of smoking fires. From a small battery in front of this camp a shell came at intervals, clear across the valley towards a British advanced picquet upon the next ridge to us, and the great distance considered, several of them exploded wonderfully near to those for whom they were evidently intended.

The Russian batteries before the town were quite silent, though where we stood,

the men told me, no person could show himself a short time ago, without having a round shot or a shell sent at him; but latterly, it seems, the Russian gunners have nearly abandoned the practice of firing upon single individuals, or very small parties, unless they suppose such to be officers.

Before the harbour's mouth could be seen a dozen ships and steamers lying at anchor, the latter with steam up, watching the skulking Russians so ingloriously sheltering themselves inside; among the latter, a huge three-decker moored in the middle of the harbour, was very conspicuous.

But day was closing and I had seven or eight miles of bog to recross; therefore having shared with a civil and communicative sergeant the contents of my haversack and brandy flask, I reluctantly turned my back upon this wonderful scene, and set out on my return.

Before I had got clear of the camp, another fall of snow coming on, accom-

panied with thick fog, it was with difficulty that I made my way back to Balaklava, the snow obliterating all tracks, and the fog shutting out every surrounding object. The guiding sound of an occasional gun, however, enabled me to keep pretty near my course; and early in the evening I found myself once more before the cheerful fire of my friend's cabin.

## CHAPTER VII.

"Too Late:" its Disaster, Misery, and Suffering—Outrageous Blundering—The Sick Equal the Reinforcements—Another Day at the Camp—Intense Cold—A Near View of Sebastopol—Chapman's Battery—A Visit to the Advanced Trenches—Narrow Escape from a Russian Bullet—Unextinguished Spirit of the Soldiers—Bad Fires and Green Coffee.

THURSDAY, 4th. We heard much firing at Sebastopol during the night, but we have not learned the cause. Snow is falling fast, hills, ships, and houses are covered with winter's hoary mantle; and the icy blast whistles through the crowded masts and cordage of the shipping. What must be the suffering at the camp in such weather it is melancholy to contemplate. Not one of the wooden huts is yet set up, nor is there any present prospect of their being conveyed to the camp. With the exception of a few boards carried on men's shoulders to the Highlanders, Marines, and

other camps close at hand, and used to sleep upon, the materials are still on board ship, or floating in the form of rafts in the harbour, where they serve the purposes of wharfs, or landing places. There appears little chance of all this bulky material reaching the camp until it can be transported by rail; but as, up to the present time, nothing has been done towards the construction of the projected railroad beyond taking levels and selecting the line, the prospect of relief from that quarter is as yet, there is reason to fear, very distant; and it is apprehended that winter will have done its worst before the steam horse can bring the needed succours. Yet the railroad is the grand hope of all—the panacea which is to cure all evils.

“Ah,” I heard it frequently said while among the camps yesterday, “ah, if the railroad was only finished things would go better.”—“If we had the huts and the fur coats we should be all right.”

But the fur coats, like the huts, are still

here at Balaklava, in the holds of the vessels which brought them hither, or, what is worse, unshipped only to be wasted and destroyed. The lighter I have before alluded to still remains as she was, and her precious freight, still unprotected, is buried beneath a pile of snow. When too late—when more than half the winter shall have passed, and more than half the army shall have become inmates of the hospitals, or sunk into their graves—the huts and warm clothing will probably find their way to the camp. *Too late*—how much of the disaster, misery, and suffering of the army, can be explained by these two words!

The extraordinary amount, the ingenious variety of blundering, which has been practised to bring about this invariable result—*too late*, is almost too monstrous for belief. An army is perishing of cold, wet, and hunger, within sight of the most abundant supplies and means of relief. A road is to be constructed to bring the two together, but it will be *too late*.

Horses are dying from exposure at a rate which threatens the speedy extinction of our cavalry force, whilst the tarpaulings intended to form shelter for them are lying in the holds of vessels in the harbour. No doubt these tarpaulings will be ultimately landed, and applied as intended to the construction of sheds, but it will be *too late*.

Again, it is known that the ill-fated Prince had on board when she foundered a quantity of medical stores, much needed at Scutari at the time, but these being stowed underneath supplies destined for the Crimea could not be got at till it was *too late*.

A large quantity of boots intended for the army was allowed to remain in the hold of the Medway for five months, though the commander of the ship made frequent application while at Balaklava for instructions with regard to them; and the Golden Fleece, in like manner, brought six thousand pairs of boots to Balaklava, but could obtain no instructions nor authority to land them. From Balaklava she sailed to

Varna, afterwards went back to Balaklava, and then proceeded to Malta, with the boots still on board, though the army was during this time barefooted, and at the camp a pound was freely given for a pair of old shoes. When the Golden Fleece again returned to Balaklava, and the urgent want of shoes had ceased to be felt, her six thousand pairs were landed, but again *too late*.

Instances of this system of incomprehensible, outrageous blundering, might be multiplied without end. The Jason, at a time when the batteries were short of powder, was sent down to Malta without discharging a large quantity of that necessary article which she had brought to Balaklava; and, not long since, a vessel half full of coals was sent off post-haste to Constantinople to bring a supply of that self-same commodity for the use of the fleet. How can such things happen? is a question that everybody asks, but nobody answers.

The charcoal imported for fuel is be-



ginning to reach the camp in small quantities; and one of the first results is the death of Captain Swinton, of the Artillery, who was found suffocated in his tent; and several other officers have narrowly escaped falling victims, in like manner, to the effects of carbonic acid gas.

Great numbers of sick are daily brought down from the camp—not less, I am informed on good authority, than two thousand five hundred have come in within the last ten days; this is just equal to the amount of the reinforcements that have arrived within the same period; there is, it would appear, therefore, small hope at present of increasing even the numerical strength of our remnant of an army now before Sebastopol.

The weather continued so inclement, snow falling all day, that I made no attempt to leave my snug quarters in the Medway's cabin. This evening there are indications of freezing, and the rising quicksilver gives promise of a change to drier weather.

Friday, 5th. This morning the sun rose bright and clear in a cloudless sky, with the thermometer down to 20°. Wrapped and buttoned up in coats and woollens, till I could scarcely raise my hand to my head, I got early ashore, and set out for another day at the camp. Tracks and landmarks are all obliterated or disguised, and the entire landscape is clothed in a smooth sheet of dazzling whiteness, marked and seamed with long dark lines, formed by the passage of men and animals carrying provision up to the camp.

So intense was the cold, that before I had been long out my breath congealed upon the hair of my upper lip, and my horse's tail became a bunch of rattling icicles. Travelling was even more laborious than on the last occasion, for the snow, without hardening the surface, covered and concealed the deeper sloughs, which I might otherwise have avoided, and my horse consequently was often nearly bogged.

I reached the camp, however, after a

long struggle; and then, keeping more to the left than I did the last day, I came in view of Sebastopol at a point much nearer the works. A large English battery (Chapman's) was before me, some distance down the slope; and, as no firing was going on at this part, I went forward, and rode down to it.

For half a mile to the rear of the battery, round shot, with some unexploded shells, cover the ground in astonishing quantity; the snow, which was not deep enough to cover, rendering them more conspicuous. In hollow places they fairly lay in heaps; I saw twenty lying in a space that I might have covered with my coat, and at any time I might have stood still and counted a hundred round me.

In the battery a number of men were at work, repairing and strengthening the embrasures, and laying new platforms for guns. The chips produced by this operation were eagerly collected to feed a small

fire, over which the men occasionally strove to warm their benumbed fingers.

The icy blast was so penetrating, that, although I wore two pairs of trowsers, two shirts, two waistcoats, a coat, and great coat, besides flannel under-clothing, thick lined gloves, and a large woollen comforter, I was so cramped and stiffened, that when I dismounted I was obliged to avail myself of this fire for some minutes before I could straighten myself, or recover sufficient power and sensation in my fingers to enable me to open my haversack, or get at my brandy flask.

All the eastern part of Sebastopol opposite this battery looked very tranquil and undisturbed, the occasional popping of rifles alone indicating that anything in the way of strife was going forward.

To the left, the French trenches cover the slopes, with their tortuous lines leading down to the advanced works of our active allies, where hotter work appears to be going on, the sullen roar of cannon occa-

sionally mingling with the incessant and rapid succession of rifle reports.

As I was leaving the battery, I met with an officer who was going to the advanced trenches, and gladly accepted his offer to take me down with him. Passing out by one of the embrasures, we made a short cut to the first trench, by passing over an open space of about two hundred yards; here the snow and earth were freshly torn up by Russian shot, a battery having opened this morning upon the relieving party going down to the trenches. The relieving is generally accomplished before daylight, but this morning the men were late; none, however, were killed by the shot that fell among them.

Beyond the first trench it was not considered safe to show, so we proceeded thence by the zigzag or covered way; this was in some parts, however, so full of mud, ice, and water, that we preferred taking the chance of a shot to the certainty of a wetting, and no sooner were we out of the

trench, than Minié balls began to hiss over our heads. "That's at us," my companion coolly remarked, as the first ball whizzed by.

When we gained the advanced trench which was filled with men, we were less than five hundred yards distant from the outworks of the Russians, whom we could plainly discern moving about in considerable numbers, and passing into their trenches, which led down to some new earthworks on the opposite side of the ravine, immediately in our front. It was not safe, however, to indulge curiosity too far, by looking over the trench. I was warned by one of the men near me not to show my head too long, or at least in one spot, and I had scarcely come down, when a bullet whizzed over the place where I stood. Two dead riflemen were lying here; they had been shot during the morning, whilst showing their heads up to take aim. The Russian sharpshooters were concealed in "rifle-pits," in advance of their works.

We could plainly see the muzzles of the guns grinning through the embrasures of the earth-works; they were quite silent now, but a deep gap ploughed through the top of the earth-bank that protects the trench in which we stood, showed that they had been recently at work. No person had been injured, the men said, by the heavy shot which made this gap, though it drove the earth into their faces, and came so low as to pass between their heads.

As the sun was declining, I was compelled to leave this exciting and interesting scene sooner than I should have wished to do. In returning, the Russian marksmen showed me the same polite attention that they had done on my coming down, but I regained the battery unscathed, and re-entering the embrasure by which I had quitted it, felt myself again out of reach of all compliments of the kind.

The fine spirit and manly bearing of the soldiers, under all their sufferings and hardships, fill one with admiration. Though

looking pinched and wasted in features and person, their once bright uniforms so begrimed and bedaubed that the colours are nearly undistinguishable, and their firelocks rusted and dirty, the valiant hardy spirit still remains unchanged. Many with whom I have conversed, say they would prefer to remain had they the option now to go. They hope the worst has passed, they say, and that the railroad will soon be made, and bring them their huts and all they want; or, at any rate, some of them observed to me, "if the next two months were 'put through,' the weather would be getting warmer, and they would be 'all right.'" Having borne and suffered so much, too, they would rather, many of them say, remain and see the end; they would not like to miss the taking of Sebastopol, and taken they most of them believe it ultimately will be.

Thus these fine fellows continue hoping almost against hope, and consoling themselves under their protracted miseries with



every prospect of relief, however faint and however distant; of course there are exceptions.

The following anecdote which was related to me by one who was present upon the occasion referred to, shows that there are some who would gladly escape from the sufferings of the camp by any means:—A few days since my informant was in a battery, when one of the men near him was struck by a rifle-ball in a very fleshy part of his person; the fellow instantly clapping his hand upon the wound, quite exultingly, and with a promptitude that betrayed the feeling uppermost in his mind, exclaimed, “Well, thank God that’s three months at Scutari.”

Leaving Chapman’s battery, I recrossed the long snow-covered slope in its rear, without the enemy’s gunners taking any notice of me, though I was told that mounted persons were seldom allowed to pass without the compliment of a shot or a shell, and the snow must have rendered me

very conspicuous. I was almost affronted at being treated with such contempt, as I felt half a wish to see a shot or two strike the ground about me, provided they did not come too near.

The sun was going down when I reached the camps, but as the sky was clear, and I apprehended no difficulty in finding my way down to Balaklava by night, I remained awhile to look about me. Going into a camp of French, a soldier obligingly offered to hold my horse while I visited some of their little underground dwellings, which though confined, damp, and uncomfortable enough, are far less wretched places of residence than the cold, dismal, mouldy tents in which our troops are lodged.

One of the greatest privations, perhaps the greatest and most severely felt, is the want of fuel. A pile of blazing logs before the door, would render even a tent endurable in the worst weather, while the miserable apologies for fires here seen, sparingly fed with a meagre allowance of green sticks

and roots of brushwood, emit only blinding clouds of smoke in place of heat, and suffice to spoil the comfort of the best constructed of the huts.

Such is the only description of firing at the command of the men, to whom green coffee berries have been given as a material wherewith to provide themselves a warm drink when they return to their tents, cramped and half frozen from the trenches. I have seen them engaged in the attempt, vainly endeavouring to roast the coffee berries in the lid of a camp kettle, over a smouldering heap of green, hissing sticks, which, their eyes blinded with smoke, they vainly endeavoured to fan with their breath into a flame. In most instances, however, the coffee berries are at once rejected as useless, and may be seen mingled with the mud outside the doors, or openings of the tents. These things I have seen, and yet we read in the columns of the *Times*, that a most liberal offer made by a British firm to furnish the means and appliances neces-

sary for supplying the forces here with coffee roasted, and ready prepared for use, was met in high quarters with the remarkable assertion, that no assistance of the kind was necessary, as the report that the troops were supplied with green coffee was quite erroneous.

Passing through the camp of a French cavalry division, I had an opportunity of observing the mode of treatment by which their horses are kept in such very superior condition to ours. The means employed are very simple: the horses are merely placed in large trenches partly excavated, and partly built up with rough stones, but altogether so deep, that the sides rise considerably above the heads of the animals: thus they are completely protected from the wind, which is their worst enemy, and the floor of the trench being upon the hard, rocky subsoil, and kept comparatively dry by means of a well in the corner, the horses are enabled to lie down and obtain rest.

But while the French cavalry commander

constructs trenches to shelter his horses and keep them alive, ours inspects accoutrements, and finds fault with rusty stirrups, but leaves his horses to die of cold and exposure. Some cavalry officers with whom I had an opportunity of conversing when passing through the camp this morning, spoke with much bitterness on this subject.

The scene in a "sick tent" that I looked into was one of the most heart-rending I ever beheld. This was one of the tents in which the sick are lodged, awaiting a conveyance to Balaklava; and here upon the bare floor formed of stone, in the manner I have before described, and covered with a coating of liquid mud, a dozen poor fellows, chiefly diarrhoea patients, were stretched. The wretched men lay in the mire, each wrapped in a single blanket only; shivering and trembling, they were huddled close together, in the vain endeavour to keep each other warm. On my entering, many of the unhappy sufferers silently raised their pallid, death-like faces,

evidently in the hope that relief had come, but perceiving the truth, they sank back again with an expression of hopeless despondency, and I hurried from a scene of such distress, where I could only sympathize, but had no power to help.

Evening had closed ere I got clear of the camp, but the snow upon the ground lessened the darkness, and after going a little out of my way, and finding myself stopped by trenches, and challenged by Turkish sentries, I at last got fairly upon the track to Balaklava. The cold was now so severe, that overtaking a party of soldiers going down, I was glad to mount one of them upon my horse, while I walked and ran on before, to warm myself, the soldier appearing equally pleased with the arrangement, and in no hurry to change places again. We reached Balaklava rather late, and I was by no means sorry to find myself once more on board the *Medway*. His Excellency Omar Pasha arrived last night on board the *Inflexible* from Varna but he

landed this morning so early and so quietly, that he had quitted Balaklava and gone to the camp, before anybody was aware of his movements, and many who, like myself, wished to get a view of the hero, were disappointed. Report says, that a council of war has been held to-day at Lord Raglan's quarters, and great are the hopes that something may soon be attempted that will relieve the weary monotony of the trench duties. My friend, Mr. B——, left this afternoon in the steamship Severn, for Constantinople, without having been able to reach the trenches, or get a sight of Sebastopol, so difficult is it here to procure a horse upon any terms. Mr. B—— may complain of extraordinary ill-fortune in this respect, as he brought a horse with him from Constantinople, but the creature provokingly died the day it was landed.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Preparations for Leaving the Crimea—Embarkation of the Sick and Wounded—Their Sufferings from the Cold—A Memento of the Naval Bombardment—Unwonted Prudence in an English Admiral—Departure for Constantinople—The Odours from the Sick and Wounded—Horrors of the “Middle Passage”—Indecent Burial of the Dead—Installation at Old Quarters.

SATURDAY, 6th. There appears little probability of either battle or bombardment for the present; and having now seen enough to satisfy my curiosity, I shall be glad to quit these dismal and harrowing scenes, to seek in more sunny climes, and amid more cheerful influences, an escape from the melancholy and depression which here weigh upon the spirits of the most light-hearted, and produce an universal gloom and depression which even a casual visitor, like myself, cannot avoid sharing. I do not remember having seen a smile since I came to the Crimea, and certainly I have



not heard anything approaching a hearty laugh.

Hearing that the Thames steamer is to leave to-morrow for Constantinople, I repaired on board the Orient this morning, and made application to Captain Christie for a passage in her. This was immediately granted in the most obliging manner, and upon the usual conditions upon which these permissions are given to amateur visitors passing to or from the Crimea—namely, that I should be content to take such accommodation as the purser should have at his command to give, and that I should pay a certain daily rate for my board.

The weather to-day is the most dismal we have yet experienced; the sky is darkened with dull, leaden clouds, and a north wind cuts into one's very bones. Icicles half a yard long depend from the eaves of the houses on shore, and from the paddle-wheels and sponsons of the steamers in the harbour. Ice chokes up the scuppers, and coats the decks, and ice has even

solidified the deep quagmires of Balaklava; in fact, ice and snow are now as universal as were mud and mire a few days ago.

By bad luck, or bad arrangement, it falls out that great movements are going on among the sick in this dreadful weather. Boat-loads of the hapless victims, blue with cold, have been passing about the harbour all day long to be put on board ship. The Thames is taking in a number of them, of whom many are suffering from frost-bitten feet, the effects of the intense cold of the last two nights. It is truly pitiable to behold the sufferings of these poor men as they are brought alongside, rigid and half-dead with cold, and hoisted in over the gangway so imperfectly clothed or wrapped up, that their swollen and livid feet are generally quite devoid of covering, and exposed to the full vigour of the cutting blast.

This evening I dined at the ward-room mess of the Sanspareil screw line of battle-ship of seventy guns. She is one of the

few ships that followed the gallant example of the *Agamemnon* in going close in to Fort Constantine during the bombardment of the 17th of October; and though she has since been repaired, she still bears numerous evidences of the conflict, in the shape of patches in various parts of the hull, holes in her funnel and steam-pipe, and cuts and bruises in her beams and timbers. In the ward-room a large piece of shell remains sticking in the mizen mast. She lost fifteen men killed, and fifty wounded, during the action.

The tardy movements of the British Fleet on that memorable day, and the want of daring displayed by many of the ships in their mode of attacking the forts, are subjects much discussed here; and there appears to be a feeling among the military, that the fleet failed to create the diversion in favour of the besieging batteries that it ought to have done, and did not take its fair share of the dangers of the day. I have heard it said, and upon autho-

rity that I am not inclined to doubt, that before the action began, the British admiral, in reply to a suggestion in reference to the disposal of the wounded, said, "that it was not his intention to have any wounded;" and assuredly the safe distance of two thousand five hundred yards, which common report assigns to the Britannia while engaging Fort Constantine, leads to the presumption that the admiral really meant what he said.

Sunday, 7th. The sun came brightly forth again this morning, and shone with so much warmth, that the beneficial effects of the late frosts in hardening the surface of the ground, and rendering the road more practicable, are already almost neutralized, and mud is beginning to reassert its dominion.

The day passed away without bringing the anticipated sailing orders for the Thames; but as these were hourly expected by the captain, I dared not lose sight of the vessel; and thus was pro-

vokingly wasted the finest day that has occurred since my arrival here, and which I might have spent so much to my satisfaction, in making a visit to the French lines before Sebastopol.

Monday, 8th. Immediately after breakfast, being warned that the Thames was getting under weigh, I took leave of my kind host, and hurried on board; so much time was, however, lost waiting for final instructions, that it was eleven o'clock before we got fairly away. In consequence of this delay, we shall not, the captain says, reach the Bosphorus to-morrow evening in time to go in, no vessels being permitted to pass the entrance after dark. This is the more vexatious as the ship is quite full: all the berths taken up for invalided officers, and a bed on the saloon-floor the best accommodation obtainable by amateur passengers, of whom there are four or five besides myself, the prospect of an additional night's detention on board is consequently a matter of serious annoyance.

The day is bright and fine; and as we clear the Bay of Balaklava, and command a view along the shore towards Cape Chersonese, clouds of white smoke shooting upwards in rapid succession in the direction of Sebastopol, tell that there is heavy firing going on to-day.

We have a fair wind and smooth sea; but as it is thought we cannot reach the Bosphorus in time to enter to-morrow evening, the captain saves his coals, and does not go at full speed, content to be off the entrance by daylight on Wednesday morning, and our progress is, therefore, not very rapid.

As the receding coasts of the melancholy Crimea sink lower and lower beyond the wave, every heart seems lightened and relieved; but still our cheerfulness is of a very tempered quality—we bear with us a freight of human suffering and misery sufficient to suppress all feelings of gladness or gaiety. Between decks we carry one hundred and fifty disabled men, sick,

wounded, and dying. Few are able to stand; they lie upon the bare decks with only a blanket or two about them; and on this hard bed many are destined to breathe their last sighs.

To minister to the wants of all this mass of helpless sufferers there are a few orderlies only; and a single young assistant-surgeon has the whole care of providing for their medical necessities. The surgeon is himself almost disabled from ill-health, and complains of being unsupplied with much that is requisite to enable him to afford the sick all the treatment and assistance they require.

The stench that arises from the lower decks, and pervades every part of the ship, even to the saloon, is terrific, and suggests ideas of dysentery or cholera, which increase one's anxiety to terminate the voyage as early as possible.

To add to our discomforts, it was discovered when bed-time arrived that bedding was scarce in the cabin, and that a mattress

was all that the steward could furnish to some of us; this to me was a matter of little consequence, as I had a good supply of blankets, great coats, and wrappers, of my own, a part of the provision I laid in at Alexandria in anticipation of my Crimean trip, so that I was enabled now not only to provide for myself, but to help some of my friends.

Tuesday, 9th. The fair wind and smooth sea continue; and our captain now acknowledges that had he come at full speed all the way from Balaklava yesterday he would have been able to reach Constantinople to-night; the distance is about three hundred miles.

The dreadful odours that pervade the ship become more intolerable every hour, notwithstanding the most abundant use of disinfecting fluid, chloride of lime, and the like, which, quite powerless to suppress the stench, seem but to aid in producing a more outrageous "compound of villanous smells."



During the still hours of the night, groans and suppressed cries of pain could be heard throughout the ship, telling of anguish and tortures unendurable among the unhappy sufferers on the decks below. On those hard decks how many a poor soul is doomed to "shuffle off its mortal coil." Without a friend to soothe his dying agony, full many a wretch gives up the ghost, unwept, uncared for. Here is no voice to speak of consolation, or whisper hope; no ear to catch the latest words, the last fond message he fain would send to distant friends. Numbers are around him, but, callous with suffering, absorbed in contemplation of their own miseries, they watch his last struggles with cold, unsympathizing eyes, or, with desperate levity, wager with each other how many of their number shall pass like him from this world ere they can reach the hospital at Scutari, and escape from the horrors of this "middle passage."

When all is over, and the corpse rolled

in a blanket is carried on deck, a little commotion about the gangway, and a slight splash in the sea alongside, alone announce that another fellow mortal has gone to his last resting-place. No ceremony is observed, no solemn words are spoken. As the spirit departed without comfort, ~~so~~ the body is cast forth without prayer, and without intercession, like so much worthless carrion.

This scene is repeated at frequent intervals throughout the day; and yet we have a clergyman on board, who, though returning from the camp on sick leave, is not to all appearance such an invalid as to be incapacitated for the performance of the duties of his sacred office.

Frequent showers during the day prevented our remaining much on deck, and the dark, gloomy aspect of the weather served to increase the general depression.

Soon after dark the lights at the entrance of the Bosphorus were sighted, upon which the ship was laid to, to wait for daylight.

Wednesday, 10th. So badly were matters managed last night, that when day broke we were above thirty miles off the land.

As we passed through the Bosphorus, the landscapes of its beautiful shores were seen to great disadvantage under a cold, wintry, leaden sky; and the white caps of the mountains upon the Asiatic side showed that snow has fallen here as well as at the Crimea during our absence.

We came to anchor off Scutari about eleven o'clock: and getting ashore with all haste, I was soon reinstalled in my old quarters at Messeri's. The sun broke out about midday, and the afternoon was one of the most genial I have experienced here.

Among the company at the table d'hôte this evening was General Pennefather, who has arrived from the Crimea *en route* to England,

## CHAPTER IX.

Changeable Weather—Snow in Constantinople—Mosque of Suliman—Castle of the Seven Towers—Old Wall of Constantine—Valley of the Sweet Waters—Bad News from the Crimea—A Collision with a Boatman—Genoese Tower of Galata—English Mischief—A Lady of Energy and Decision.

THURSDAY, 11th. Surely never was there a climate so changeable as this; yesterday seemed the beginning of fine weather, and to-day its snows and rains a deluge, and the cold north wind is blowing a perfect tempest. A persecuting cold, with which I have been annoyed more or less ever since I first passed the Dardanelles, being rather worse than usual to-day, I kept my room, almost wishing that, like the dormouse, I could roll myself up, and doze away the time till the return of summer weather.

Friday, 12th. All Constantinople is clad

in a mantle of white; snow covers the housetops, and blanches the filthy streets, and snow is still falling in the most relentless manner. Old residents here say that such cold weather is very uncommon, and they predict a severe winter.

What is to be the fate of our army it is fearful to speculate upon; the sick are coming in thicker and faster every week. Eleven thousand are now in the ships and hospitals, and at Scutari alone thirty to thirty-five men are buried daily, while at the camp, in the transport ships, and at Bala-klava, full double that number are each day tumbled into shallow graves, or thrown into the waters of the Black Sea; thus, near upon a thousand men are lost to our army every week by death, besides a considerable number permanently disabled by wounds and sickness, and yet we have eight or nine weeks of the worst of the winter still to get through.

I left the house to-day only to make an unsuccessful search through half the shops

in Constantinople for some kind of fur cap, something to rescue me from the miserable state of continual sneezing and snuffling to which I seem here perpetually doomed, but nothing of the kind is to be had. A consignment of sealskin caps came in while I was away at Balaklava, but they are all sold off already. My friend, Major B——, secured one, which I quite envy him.

Saturday, 13th. The weather looking a little more promising, I engaged a mounted dragoman, and set out to visit the famous Castle of the Seven Towers, and the Old Wall of Constantinople, a large portion of which is yet standing upon the landward side of Stamboul.

On our way we visited the Mosque of Suliman, one of the oldest in the city. The stained windows are very beautiful. In one of the galleries of the interior I observed a large pile of trunks, boxes, and packages, of divers shapes and sizes. Upon inquiry, I was informed that these chiefly contain valuables which had belonged to

persons, who having died intestate, the property is thus lodged for security until the next of kin shall be of age to inherit. Other of the packages belong to persons absent on pilgrimage to Mecca.

A part of the Seven Towers is now used as a powder magazine, and consequently the sentry on guard at first refused us admittance without a written permission, which we had neglected to procure. Demetrius, my dragoman, however, bethought him of a happy expedient, and by representing me as no less a personage than a general of the British army he overcame the sentry's scruples, and we were allowed to pass.

From the summit of the Towers is obtained a fine commanding view of the city, the harbour, and the sea of Marmora; but the structure is principally interesting as having been the place of confinement of so many Christian ambassadors, and other great personages, during the days of Moslem pride and power. We were shown

the ancient dungeon in the lower part of one of the seven towers of which—as the name denotes—the building consists; it is a low apartment, without window or any opening other than the door by which the luckless prisoners passed to their dismal captivity. On the walls some have left touching records of their wretchedness in brief inscriptions deeply and laboriously graven in the hard stones. I regretted not having with me any means of copying some of these, the despairing language of which was extremely affecting.

From the Seven Towers we followed for some miles the line of the old walls, which are still so perfect as to render distinguishable the breach by which the conquering Ottomans entered when they took Constantinople.

The sun shone out a little during the afternoon; but before we reached home, towards sunset, a thick snow storm came on so suddenly that in a few minutes we found ourselves almost in darkness, and



were glad to regain the friendly shelter of Messeri's.

Sunday, 14th. A bright sun tempted me out on horseback, but the intense cold soon drove me in again. The country is covered with snow and ice, as are also the streets to such an extent as to render the more precipitous ones in the direction of Galata quite impracticable for horses, and scarcely safe for pedestrians.'

My ride only extended to the famed Valley of Sweet Waters, a little vale at the head of the Golden Horn. It may be called the park of Constantinople, and in summer is much frequented by the Turkish ladies on festivals and holidays. The Sultan has here a kiosk prettily situated beside the stream that flows through the valley, and falls over a series of artificial cascades which in hot weather must have a very delightful effect. The stream is bordered with fine trees; beyond this, however, nothing has been done in the shape of improvement; the ground at best is a mere

open meadow, and just now is a perfect marsh covered with ice and water. The surrounding hills are bare, uncultivated, and barren, affording only scanty pasture for a few sheep and goats.

Monday, 15th. I had intended to leave Constantinople to-day, by the steamer which goes hence to Alexandria, calling at Smyrna, and, after spending a few days at the latter place, to proceed to Malta by the boat which leaves this every Thursday, and calls at Smyrna; but I learn that, owing to the cholera existing, or said to be existing here, all vessels sailing hence are there subjected to quarantine; I am therefore doomed to some days farther sojourn in this melancholy place. Snow fell constantly throughout the whole day.

Tuesday, 16th. The fall of snow continued all last night and to-day, rendering it impossible to stir abroad; really this is a sad waste of one's time and existence. A party of sick officers who came in yesterday are the bearers of more bad news from

the Crimea. The intense cold is rendering the men more than ever inert and sleepy in the trenches, and the enemy has been again making successful sorties, which, though on a small scale, have occasioned the loss of many valuable lives.

The scarcity of fuel is increasing, and cases of frost-bite are becoming numerous. The French, chiefly from this cause, are now losing more men than they have hitherto done; this I have on the authority of one of Prince Napoleon's aides-de-camp, who dines at the table d'hôte. While the men die of cold the fur coats still remain at Balaklava, no one having wit enough to devise a means to bring the men and the coats together, though, in my humble judgment, it seems difficult to explain why, if the clothing cannot be moved in wholesale quantities up to the camp, the men cannot be brought, in detail, down to Balaklava to receive it. Hundreds come every day down on fatigue duty, and these, at any rate, might, one would suppose,

receive their coats and carry them away on their backs; but to issue clothing to the troops in so irregular a mode would probably be contrary to custom and precedent, and in that case, of course, inadmissible by our antiquated commanders.

We have several new comers from England who, like all others lately arrived thence, speak of a growing feeling of dissatisfaction with the *Times* newspaper, in consequence of its loud and persevering complaints of the management and condition of the army and hospitals. John Bull, it appears, is becoming tired of hearing unpleasant truths which the great leading journal, with such noble disregard of the proverbial thanklessness of the office, has taken upon itself to tell him. This is unpalatable intelligence out here, for, except in certain obvious quarters, the bold and decided part taken by the *Times* has been the subject of general congratulation, and the sheet anchor of all hope for reform and improvement.

Wednesday, 17th. A bright, clear, frosty morning shows all Constantinople glittering with ice and snow. Hearing that the Orinoko, a splendid steam-ship of near three thousand tons, is to sail on Saturday, direct to Malta, I made my way down the steep, slippery, frozen street to Admiral Boxer's office, and had again only to thank him for the obliging readiness with which he acceded to my request to be allowed to go in her. I next went on board, where I learned from the captain that the berths are all taken up for sick officers; but, as the passage boats are small, and by calling at Smyrna they make a week's voyage of it hence to Malta, I am resolved to go in the Orinoko, even though I should again have to put up with a bed on the cabin floor.

Coming on shore from the ship I was nearly getting led into a row by the provoking behaviour of my caiquee, or boatman. On reaching the landing place I was obliged to go on shore to obtain change to pay my fare, in the meanwhile, at the

fellow's suggestion, leaving my shawl in the caique. When I returned, after a few minutes, to the water-side, my friend had pushed off from the shore, carrying my plaid with him, and there sitting at his ease he, with the most irritating coolness, made me to understand that unless I would pay him double the ordinary fare he would not return.

Not feeling disposed, however, to be thus openly forced into submission to so impudent an extortion, I refused compliance with the fellow's demand, and after a few minutes' parley cut the matter short by jumping into another caique and pushing out towards him. The man very calmly awaited my approach till I was in the act of boarding, when, starting to his feet, he tossed the embargoed shawl to me, and thus saved his head from contact with the short boat-hook—a most tempting weapon—which I had snatched from the unwilling hand of the man in whose boat I stood, and probably also saved me from the con-

sequences of a serious affray, for I had lost my temper and with it my discretion.

This afternoon, profiting by the clear state of the atmosphere, I obtained a splendid view of the whole of Constantinople, together with a wide extending prospect over the shores of the Bosphorus and sea of Marmora, by ascending the Genoese Tower of Galata. When near the summit I heard some one above me call out "Now let's cut," and immediately afterwards met a party of English, apparently junior officers belonging to some of the steamers, hurrying down; they had, I observed when I reached the upper gallery, been manifesting—in a mode which I am afraid I must call English—their appreciation of the liberality of the Turkish authorities in unreservedly admitting Christians to visit all places of interest, by doing all the mischief in their power, casting loose, unreeving, and disarranging the numerous signal halliards attached to the lofty spire and mast with which the Tower

is surmounted, and leaving all in such a state of confusion as could not be easily rectified.

Among the company at the table d'hôte we have had, for some days past, a French woman, the incidents connected with whose coming to the East form so amusing a little history that I will here relate them, as they were told to me. The lady, who is travelling quietly, though not exactly *incog.*, is young, rather good-looking, and of very high rank, but her name and title it is unnecessary here to mention. She has a brother, an officer in the French army, who a short time ago, seduced by the arts of a woman of notorious character at Paris, was on the point of disgracing his family by a matrimonial alliance; the nuptial day was fixed, and all arrangements for the marriage completed, when the matter reached the ears of the sister, whose energy and decision soon proved an overmatch for the arts of the mistress. She flew, without losing a moment, to the hotel of the



war minister, obtained an audience, and relating all the circumstances, entreated that her brother might be ordered immediately to join the army before Sebastopol, and so promptly was the request complied with, that in a few hours the astonished lover found himself hurrying along the Lyons Railway, *en route* for the Crimea, leaving his discomfited bride-elect to wonder at this sudden resolution and escape of her intended prize.

Having thus saved her brother from the consequences of his own folly, this incomparable sister has been giving a fresh proof of her courage and affection, by visiting him at the camp in the Crimea, and she is now on her way back to Paris.

## CHAPTER X.

*Last Visit to the Bazaars—Bargaining with Turkish Merchants—Importunate and Plundering Interpreters—Outwitted by a Jew—Ineffectual attempts to see the Sultan—Prince Napoleon, the Duke of Cambridge, and Two Seraglio Beauties—Museum of Turkish Figures.*

THURSDAY, 18th. Time now hangs heavily on my hands, waiting the departure of the Orinoko. A last visit to the bazaars of Stamboul, to make a few more purchases of curiosities in the way of slippers and embroidered cloths, helped me through the day; indeed, I know no better recipe for killing time than buying in a Turkish bazaar. The expenditure of a very few pounds will afford ample occupation for a whole morning, if you can only divest yourself of your English reluctance to dwell and haggle over a trifling bargain, and fall in with the customs and manners

of the place; in fact, one soon comes to learn that there is no choice but to waste either one's time or money in a Turkish bazaar, and therefore it is only to make one's election, and give the most of that which is of the least value at the moment.

Those who run to the bazaars to buy in a hurry, will assuredly pay near double the just price for all they may purchase, while those whose object is to pass away a morning, may find amusement, and save their money by bargaining, which is conducted something as follows:

We will take the bazaar of silks and embroidery work, such as shawls, scarfs, tobacco bags, and above all, tempting to the eyes of English purchasers, as convertible into table-covers, rich embroidered cloths worked by the women in the seclusion of the hareems, and used by the wealthy among the faithful to kneel upon while engaged in their frequent devotions.

You saunter down the long, dark arcade, between rows of grave and portly Turks,

who, on either hand, are seated crosslegged upon low, wooden platforms, stolidly smoking, or with slow and measured speech conversing, while they recharge the exhausted chibouk, with such of their neighbours as happen to be similarly engaged. Behind the low platform rises a tier of shelves, upon which the stock in trade is stored, while samples of every kind are hung and spread out in tempting variety. Among such abundance you are undecided where to choose, and not being in a hurry, keep wandering on, charmed with the brilliancy of the display, till some one of the immovable crosslegged figures having finished his pipe, or by some means become roused to a more active consideration of his worldly affairs, attracts your attention by a sudden hissing sound—whi-s-s-s-t—you look round, and with undisturbed gravity, this more enterprising dealer points upwards to some showy wares displayed before the shelves above his head.

Thus brought to the point, you make a

selection, and by signs inquire the price; the Turk replies by counting up the sum on his fingers, it being understood that the reckoning is in piastres; he asks two hundred and fifty. This does not seem very dear, but having been forewarned, you produce your purse, and offer one hundred and fifty; the Turk shakes his head, utters a low exclamation sounding like *youk*, and spreading a carpet upon the edge of his platform, makes signs to you to be seated. He now offers a pipe, and his son, who has been sitting crosslegged by his side, rises, and presently brings coffee in a little brass vessel resembling a small shaving-pot, and the beverage, which is made by boiling the coffee in the form of very fine powder, and is nearly as thick as water gruel, is presented in diminutive brass cups containing about as much as a liqueur glass.

Meantime the old Turk smokes for awhile, and then makes some abatement in his demand; you repeat your offer; the impassive Turk again says *youk*, and you

rise to go away; you have not proceeded a dozen paces, however, before—whi-s-s-s-t—you look round, he beckons you to return, and at a hundred and sixty piastres you finally agree; the purchase is completed, and the sly old rogue betrays his contentment with the transaction, by making you to understand that whenever you desire to make further purchases, he will be happy to deal with you.

Some parts of the bazaar are quite stocked with Manchester cotton goods, the familiar English names and marks upon which strike the eye with singular effect in such a place.

About the bazaars are always to be met with numbers of Israelites, who speak French and Italian, and who importunately offer their services as interpreters and guides. These fellows are to be especially avoided, as they live and thrive by plundering the unwary; they form a sort of fraternity, uniting all their gains into a common fund, which is equally divided

among the members once a week, and the sums they occasionally collect, we were told, are surprisingly great, so much so as to appear incredible.

Colonel G——g, who commands the artillery at Malta, and who a few days ago arrived from that place, seeking his son who was among the sick at Scutari, was my companion during my rambles to-day, and falling into the hands of one of these Hebrews, was most provokingly cheated. The colonel wishing to possess himself of a few okas of the best Turkish tobacco, we accepted the offer of a man who was following us about the bazaar, and who undertook to show where the very best was to be obtained. The fellow led us through many streets, and at length entered a small tobacco shop kept by two men who spoke only Turkish, and where the wily interpreter consequently had the game all in his own hands. Tobacco of various qualities was produced, and the prices named, of course through the medium of the Jew.

My friend chose the highest priced, the required quantity was packed into a canvass bag, the money paid, and we went away. We had not, however, gone far, when our Hebrew, pleading some other engagement, procured a ragged boy to carry the tobacco, and took his leave.

Afterwards we fell in with my late guide, Demetrius, and being assured by him that the tobacco was of ordinary quality, and had been charged at three times its real price, we went back at his suggestion, and sought out the shop, when we discovered that our friend the Jew had paid over less than half of the money he received from the colonel, pocketing the lion's share himself.

The tobacco dealers now acknowledged that they had seen we were being cheated, but not being well able to make themselves understood, they had refrained from interfering. The Jew, of course, was not to be found, and we had to acknowledge ourselves fairly outwitted.



Friday, 19th. Since my arrival here, I have made several attempts to get a sight of the Sultan, but always without success. The most favourable opportunities are upon Fridays, when he is going to mosque, but he never goes two Fridays following to the same mosque, and nobody appears to know beforehand which he intends to visit; from this cause I failed to-day, as I have done on all former occasions.

This mention of the Sultan reminds me of a story that is quite current here, and seems pretty generally believed. It is told that soon after the arrival of the allied forces, his Highness presented to the Duke of Cambridge and Prince Napoleon, each a couple of beauties from the royal hareem; and while the duke, it is said, declined this delicate attention, upon the ground that the customs of his country forbade, the prince allowed no similar scruples to stand in the way of his acceptance of the magnificent gift. I do not vouch for the truth of this story, but merely give it as I heard it.

Though unsuccessful in one enterprise to-day, we were more fortunate in another, and gained admittance to a museum of human figures, which we have several times been disappointed in our attempts to visit. The figures, which are the size of life, represent, in full costume, all the principal officers and functionaries of Constantinople in the days of her power and glory. Here are Capitan Pashas, Bimbashies, or commanders of regiments, Jannissaries, and all the officers of the Sultan's household, heads of the different trades, eunuchs, black and white, and hideous dwarfs, who, as our guide expressed it, were kept to make the Sultan laugh. Though formed of clay, the figures are skilfully made, and well coloured, to represent nature; and the exhibition is altogether very interesting.

The artist, we were told, was an Armenian, who made these effigies, and exhibited them with such success, that his fame, unfortunately for him, reached the ears of the Sultan, who went to see with

his own eyes, and was so much pleased with the exhibition, that he ordered the figures to be at once removed to the museum, where they now stand, and the luckless Armenian was left free to turn his time and talents to some fresh pursuit.

Saturday, 20th. Last night we had great excitement and discussion, and such extensive brewing of rum punch as has produced an abundant crop of headache this morning. The cause of all this disturbance of the usual grave tone and tenor of our evenings at Messeri's, was the arrival of intelligence that Russia has agreed to accept the four points in their western interpretation, and that a speedy cessation of hostilities is thought likely. This news, though only found in private letters received by Major E——, one of the sojourners in the hotel, is from a quarter so likely to be well informed, that its authenticity seems probable.

As may be supposed, the news, such as it is, has produced a great sensation here,

and a very mixed feeling. The prospect of escape from further exposure to the horrors of the winter campaign is very alluring, while, on the other hand, to give up the object for which they have contended so long, and suffered so much, would to many be a great disappointment.

Thus feelings are divided, and few seem quite to know whether to be pleased or otherwise with the news. For my own part, I must confess, that to my apprehension it appears clear that no conditions which shall not include the demolition of the great fortress, we have made such efforts to destroy, can now be accepted without discredit to the allied armies; in short, that there is no honourable escape from our present position so long as Sebastopol continues to defy our power.

The Orinoko does not get away to-day, but it seems pretty certain she will sail to-morrow. The weather is again so cold and cheerless that I did not stir out.

## CHAPTER XI.

Adieu to Constantinople—An Armless Artilleryman—The Grecian Isles—Cape Matapan—The Fickle Mediterranean—Malta—Fort St. Elmo—City of Valetta—Cleanliness and Regularity of Valetta—Sepulchre of the Knights of Malta—Maltese Church-bells and the Immaculate Conception—Inveterate Prejudice in Favour of Routine.

SUNDAY, 21st. Soon after breakfast I left the hotel, and went on board the *Orinoko*, which I found with steam up, and ready for sea. She is conveying disabled officers and soldiers to England; and though so large a ship, her cabins are all engaged, and I should have fared badly had not my new friend, Colonel G——, obligingly offered me a share of his.

The day passed away in tedious delay; and although we were summoned on board this morning in such haste, that I left Messeri's without taking leave of my friend, Major B——, which I much regret, as we

may probably never meet again, it was five o'clock in the evening ere all our invalids and passengers were fairly shipped, and we got at last under weigh; then dashing rapidly out into the Sea of Marmora as the shades of evening fell, we gladly bade adieu to Constantinople, with its hospitals, its teeming graveyards, and all its sights and tales of woe.

Monday, 22nd. We lay to during the latter hours of the night waiting for dawn, to enable us to enter the Dardanelles, but the weather being rainy and thick, the offing maintained was too great, and when morning came we were three hours' distant from the entrance. Passing Gallipoli at breakfast time, we steamed rapidly through, and by noon were again in the open sea.

The weather, though dark and gloomy, is much less cold than it has been of late, and the sea is dead and motionless.

Among the disabled soldiers on board is an artilleryman, who at Inkermann lost both his arms close up to the shoulders;

they were taken off by a cannon-shot as he was in the act of ramming a charge into the gun to which he was attached. He declares that he felt little pain at the time; and, in the most manly spirit, the fine fellow makes very light of his misfortune, saying, with touching simplicity, that he only hopes "the people in England allow that the artillery did its duty at Inkermann." His arms, he tells us, seem to be "still there," and when lying down he feels them crossed upon his breast.

Tuesday, 23rd. What a contrast, what a change from the dull skies and wintry blasts of dismal Constantinople! To-day a bright, unclouded sun, fills the air with a delicious, balmy softness; and as our ship glides smoothly on among the beautiful Greek isles, the scene around is as cheerful and full of gladness, as all that we have left so few hours' distant beyond the Hellespont was gloomy, sad, and depressing. To the right the classic shores of the Morea are constantly in view, while far in

the distance, beyond the Gulf of Egina, the bright, joyous sunlight glitters upon the snowy peaks of lofty mountains bounding the horizon. On the other side, ships and vessels of every rig, with all canvass spread to catch the gentle breeze, stud the calm sea as far as the eye can reach. The only drawback to my contentment is, that I am passing Athens without a visit; but reports of the severity of the cholera there, coupled with the fact that vessels coming thence are compelled to undergo quarantine at all other Mediterranean ports, determined me to forego my intended excursion into Greece. During the afternoon two large French steamers passed us filled with troops, and dashing along towards the Dardanelles.

Before night we passed through the narrow strait between the Island of Cerigo and the mainland, and sighted Cape Matapan, three hundred miles from Constantinople. At this point we take leave of the land, and stand away across the broad



Mediterranean towards Malta, yet four hundred miles distant.

Wednesday, 24th. Another soft, calm, delicious day; the wintry abundance of clothing with which we have been of late so encumbered is thrown aside, and we bask upon the deck in the pleasant sunshine.

The voyage is less interesting to-day, as we have no land in sight, but we expect to reach Malta to-morrow by noon. Our speed is something under ten knots, and though a very satisfactory rate to travel at, is less than the size and power of this magnificent ship would warrant us in expecting; her engines are of the most improved construction, and of eight hundred horse power.

Thursday, 25th. We are not destined to conclude our voyage without experiencing a proof of the proverbial mutability of the fickle Mediterranean. At ten last night we were still gliding over a waveless sea, the calm, moonlit sky unshaded by a single

cloud; by midnight it was blowing a gale, and this morning we are tossing about, enveloped in clouds, rain, and mists, which shut from view all beyond the surging waves immediately around the ship. Look-out men are in the bows, and the captain, with his officers, are upon the bridge, vainly endeavouring to pierce the murky gloom, and catch a sight of the land, which we are now supposed to be approaching.

Noon has passed; we are still advancing cautiously at half speed, but no signs of the land have yet been discovered. It is feared we have passed the island, the mercury of the barometer is sinking rapidly, the gale increasing, and we have every prospect of being compelled to lay to, and ride it out till the weather clears.

With these gloomy anticipations we had gone below to seek some comfort in the shape of lunch and bottled porter, when the joyful cry of land in sight was heard; and hastening on deck, we found a sudden lifting of the haze had disclosed the land,

which proved to be the western extremity of Gozo, upon our lee-beam, so narrowly had we escaped passing the islands altogether.

Our troubles were now ended, the sun broke out, and the sky cleared, our ship was put about, and returning close along the pretty shores of Gozo and Malta, at about four o'clock we ran under the formidable looking batteries of Fort St. Elmo, and came to anchor in the quarantine harbour on the north side of the city of Valetta.

Numbers of shore boats—queer, short little craft, with high cocked stems and sterns—were soon alongside. I was speedily landed with my baggage, and hastening to Durnsford's Hotel, in the *Strada Reale*, I there rejoined the near and dear friends from whom I parted at Alexandria, and whom I had now the satisfaction to find quite well though somewhat uneasy at my protracted absence.

Friday, 26th. Malta, at this season at least, appears a most delightful place of

residence. The temperature is delicious, and the clearness and regularity everywhere observable in Valetta, are in most agreeable contrast with the filth and disorder of the place I have so lately quitted. The streets of Valetta are straight, evenly paved or Macadamized, and most scrupulously cleansed and swept daily, and the whole of the buildings being of fine white stone, the city has altogether a light, clean, and cheerful appearance.

As at Pera or Galata, the streets leading to the water-side are very precipitous, but here they are formed into regular flights of steps built of hewn stone. These interminable flights of steps must during the heats of summer be very fatiguing to traverse; the excessive whiteness of the pavements, walls, and houses, too, now so agreeable, must then occasion an unpleasant and painful degree of light and glare.

Saturday, 27th. Spent another day most agreeably, sauntering in the bright sunshine about the ramparts of the tremendously

powerful looking fortifications, and visiting some of the chief objects of interest in Valetta: of these, the principal is the beautiful church of St. John's, the sepulchre of the Grand Masters and Knights of Malta, whose monuments adorn the numerous side chapels; but more interesting memorials of those grim warriors are to be seen in the armoury of the palace, where are preserved the armour suits worn by the renowned Lisle d'Adam, La Valette, and others among the Grand Masters, and more famous of the Knights.

What would be the surprise of those sturdy champions of the Cross, could they revisit the beloved island they fortified at such cost, and defended with such constancy, and which long held so proud a position as the bulwark of Christianity, and terror of the Crescent, and now behold it putting forth all its resources in support of the same infidel power which they so freely shed their blood and gave their lives, in ceaseless endeavours to curb and destroy.

The greater part of the artillerymen of the garrison of Malta have been drafted away to the batteries before Sebastopol, as have also many of the larger guns and heavy mortars, and the arsenals, magazines, and dockyards, are all life and activity, preparing and forwarding supplies and munitions for the war.

Sunday, 28th. Nothing is more remarkable to a stranger here, than the perpetual clangour of church bells, not rung in regular chime, but sounding in every variety of distracting discord. Great rejoicings are now going forward to commemorate the recent decision of the Pope in favour of the Immaculate Conception. This fiat of his holiness is set forth in letters of gold, and stuck up over all the church doors, surrounded by flags and illuminations. Priests in their sacerdotal vestments pass in and out, walk in procession, and fuss about all day; and at night, when the bells are off duty, bands of street music keep up the din.

Monday, 29th. Considering the length of time that Malta has been a British possession, it appears surprising that the English language should be so little spoken or understood by the people of the island. The shopkeepers, the artizans, and all persons who have received any sort of education, speak Italian, and sometimes French, but the lowest classes speak only the Maltese dialect, which is a corrupt Arabic, and is not a written language; hence, it follows that all instruction is imparted in a borrowed tongue, but it seems extraordinary that Italian should be adopted instead of English, for this purpose. In the primary schools, of which there are several in different parts of the island, under the patronage and management of the Government, Italian is, I believe, the only language employed.

Calling to-day at the house of an officer to whom I had the pleasure of an introduction, and while engaged in a discussion upon the state of things at Balaklava and

the camp, General Sir G. B——e came in, and the part he took in the conversation too plainly proved that there is still one at least among the leaders of our devoted army, whom all the bitter experience of the last few months has failed to enlighten; one whose prejudices in favour of the present constitution, and established routine of our military system are so inveterate, that he still refuses to perceive that blundering has been a cause of misfortune, and denies that any radical change is required. Sir G. maintains that all the sufferings of our army have been no more than the *necessary* consequences of war, that no fresh men nor fresh methods are wanted, that British soldiers understand how to manage and provide for themselves in camp, as well as the French. Preparing men for the hardships of a campaign, by inuring them to a life under canvass during the summer months in camps at home, is not, the gallant general holds, the way “to keep their constitution in them,” which object, he assures us, is



better attained by housing the men constantly in warm, comfortable barracks, till the moment arrives when they are required for service.

In short, Sir G——e poo-poohs the idea that there is, or has been, any serious cause for complaint in the management of the camp, the hospitals, or any other department; and the instructive communications of the *Times*' correspondent he affects to treat as the impertinent exaggerations of one who would meddle in matters which he cannot understand; yet this is the man upon whom it is far from impossible the command of our hapless army may devolve.

## CHAPTER XII.

General Pélissier—Amphibious Life in Malta—Citta Vecchia—Public Gardens of St. Antonio—The Catacombs and their Intricacies—State Carriage of the Grand Masters—Maltese Horses—High State of Cultivation—Process of Constructing Fields—The Attractions of Malta.

TUESDAY, 30th. General Pélissier has arrived from Marseilles on his way to the Crimea, where report says he is to supersede General Canrobert in the command of the French army. We saw the former at the Opera last night, for Valetta boasts an Italian Opera; the house, though small, is handsomely got up, but I thought I had heard better singing in the little opera-house at Alexandria.

Ever since reaching Constantinople, I have found it so inconvenient, and felt it so great a privation to be unable to speak Italian, that I have resolved to acquire a

knowledge of that language before proceeding further on my travels, and to this end have engaged a master to give me daily lessons.

Admiral Steward sailed to-day for the Black Sea, where he takes command as second to Sir E. Lyons. It is feared that his absence will be much felt here, where his energy and activity in collecting, preparing, and expediting to the Crimea all kinds of necessary supplies, and the courage with which he has on various occasions incurred personal liabilities to an immense amount rather than lose valuable time—as has been the too fatal practice in other quarters—by waiting for instructions, are the theme of universal praise.

Wednesday, 31st. Through the kind attention of Colonel G——, my late fellow-passenger in the Orinoko, I became to-day an honorary member of the Union Club, which is chiefly supported by the officers of the garrison, and, considering the very limited society of the island, the

arrangements and style of the club-house appear to reflect great credit upon the management. The building is spacious and handsome, the reading-room well furnished and comfortable, and the large billiard-room contains two excellent tables.

Thursday, February 1st. Spent the day strolling about the ramparts and fortifications in quiet enjoyment of the bright sunshine and delicious temperature; after my recent experience of the snows and dismal winter of the Crimea, such weather seems an inestimable boon, and in itself a luxury indescribable. Nothing could be more agreeable than the climate of Malta at this season; but the heat is said to be excessive eight months out of the twelve.

In the months of August, September, and October the sun attains his greatest power, and then the Maltese assume, we are told, a strangely amphibious mode of life. Secluded during the daytime from the sun's fiery rays within the innermost recesses of their dwellings, they come forth towards

evening and flock to the seaside; there, attended by bands of music, and provided with refreshments, they spend the greater part of the night, not upon but *in* the water, men, women, and children. All habited in appropriate dresses, they here splash, frolic, sing, feast, and chat till the approach of morning warns them home again. A spacious shallow inlet, with a clear sandy bottom, in the vicinity of Valetta, is a favourite scene of these singular aquatic diversions.

Saturday, 3rd. Yesterday and to-day we have been most agreeably engaged riding about the island, visiting Citta Vecchia—the ancient capital of Malta—the pretty public gardens of St. Antonio, with their shady orange walks and cool fountains filled with gold and silver fish, the cave of St. Paul and the Catacombs; these, like the catacombs of Alexandria, consist of a maze of low, narrow passages, cut in the solid rock, a short distance below the surface; they are said to be so extensive that

formerly many persons entering to explore became lost among their intricate windings and never returned. It is told that a school-master with all his scholars once entered these mysterious excavations, and that not one of the party ever reappeared. To prevent accidents of this kind, the greater part of the passages are now blocked up and entrance to them prohibited.

In one of the buildings attached to the governor's country residence, at St. Antonio, is preserved the state-carriage of the Grand Masters; it is a rare machine, with wheels strong enough for a waggon: the whole has been originally covered with gilding, but the French, when they took Malta, in 1788, carried their republican antipathy to anything like aristocratic state, so far as to disguise all this with a coating of coarse paint. In the same spirit, during the short time they held possession of the island, they, with wonderful industry, defaced all the sculptured devices and armorial bearings of the knights with which the numerous

palaces, churches, and other public edifices were embellished.

The horses of Malta are capital, easy, free, and good-tempered; they are chiefly barbs exported from Tunis. Though the island is so small there is ample space for horse exercise upon the excellent roads which intersect it in all directions, and which are kept in the most perfect repair. The stable-keeper's charges are extremely low; the best horses are obtainable at three shillings a-day, or eighteen shillings a-week, and a good carriage and pair is hired for six shillings; indeed, though we hear many complaints of the recent increase in prices and rates occasioned by the war, Malta still seems a wonderfully cheap place to live in.

Coins are in circulation, and in common use here, twelve of which go to a penny; they are called grains.

Contrary to my preconceived impressions, the island is almost everywhere cultivated, and the crops look extremely vigorous, and luxuriant vegetables are produced in great

quantity and variety, besides wheat with barley and a sort of clover in ample abundance, as the low charges for horse keep and cheapness of milk and butter sufficiently prove.

To the eye, much of the effect of all this cultivation is, however, lost, and the surface of the country sadly disfigured by the numerous dry stone walls by which the land is enclosed and divided into very small fields and plots. These impart to the landscape an excessively rocky and barren aspect, and it is only on gaining some one of the highest points of land, and looking down, that one becomes aware of the extent of green surface.

Wild flowers are plentiful, and the fields quite gay with poppies, daisies, fine blue anemones, a very handsome double oxalis, jonquils, and several other bulbs and flowers.

The spade and the hoe are the implements principally used here in cultivation, which seems chiefly carried on by the



women, while the men are employed in the stone quarries, and upon buildings and public works. Ploughs, drawn by mules or oxen, are occasionally seen in the larger enclosures, and these are the same rude instruments used in Egypt and Turkey. English farm implements appear to be as effectually excluded as the English language.

No. means are neglected by which an additional rood of the naturally rocky surface of the island can be rendered capable of cultivation. Everything that can be converted into soil is carefully preserved: the dredgings of the harbours, the scrapings of the streets and roads, and even the sweepings of the decks of the ships in the port.

The first process when a new field is to be formed, is to break up and level the entire surface of the rock; the larger portions thus detached are then employed to build the inclosing walls, and the remaining fragments are further broken and pounded

down to form a substratum for the soil, which is afterwards spread over all to the depth of a few inches. In this manner several large new fields are in process of construction, by means of a quantity of dark sand raised from the bottom of the great harbour; but the richest and best lands are formed by using for the surface stratum the virgin soil of the island, which is of a dark red colour, and is obtained in limited quantities from holes and fissures in the rock.

Sunday, 4th. Seduced by the bright skies and other attractions of Malta, I have determined to let the remainder of the winter pass before proceeding further on my journey. My temporary introduction to the snows of Balaklava and Constantinople has rendered me very unwilling to renew my acquaintance with the hoary winter of the north. Moreover, I am desirous to make some progress in the study of Italian before passing over into Italy, and now therefore being about to settle for a time to

a quiet studious mode of life, and having already recorded my impressions of Malta, I shall for the present close this Diary, and not again resume my pen till I shall be about to continue my travels.

## CHAPTER XIII.

The Carnival and Ball—A Priest-ridden Community—  
Maltese Beauty a Disappointment—Contests with Sugar  
Plums—Departure from Malta—Ætna—Strait of Mes-  
sina—The once-dreaded Charybdis—Cholera Ravages—  
A Ramble in Messina—Manufacture of Macaroni—  
Beauty of the Environs of Messina.

WEDNESDAY, March 28th. So agreeable have I found my residence here, that although I have now been two months upon the island, I feel no impatience to leave it. The season is advancing, however, and as I have now become sufficiently proficient in Italian to be able to make myself understood, I have determined to proceed by the packet steamer, which leaves for Messina and Naples to-morrow.

Rides, and early walks, with picnics and parties, at my kind friend Colonel G——'s, have agreeably filled up the time I could spare from study, and I have left scarcely

a corner of the island unexplored. We have also had the Carnival, and the grand Carnival ball at the palace. This, though very numerously attended, was rather a stupid affair, but it afforded me an opportunity to see more of the Maltese of the better class than I should otherwise have done, as these are not often met in the society of the English residents. There is very little friendly intercourse between the two races: the Maltese, under the influence of their priests, it is said, being disposed to keep aloof from their Protestant fellow-subjects.

Never was there a more priest-ridden community than this of Malta; the number of handsome churches seen in all parts of the island is something extraordinary for a population of a hundred thousand souls; the Church possesses a third of the lands, and priests are everywhere seen in swarms.

With the display of Maltese beauty at the ball I was much disappointed, the prevalence of good looks among the inferior classes having somewhat raised my ex-

pectations in this respect. The promenade dress of the women of Malta is very becoming, the black silk hood and mantle, or *faldette*, setting off their generally light and graceful figures to much advantage.

The Carnival occupied the 19th, 20th, and 21st of last month; but though all business was suspended, and the three days were utterly devoted to masqueing and amusements, the whole thing was insufferably stupid and spiritless. English rule, and the influence of English opinion have, it appears, deprived the Carnival at Malta of all its ancient license, excitements, and extravagancies, and the form only now remains without the spirit.

On the present occasion, the masquers, who, with the most oppressive gravity and decorum, paraded up one street and down another, were chiefly people of the lower orders; and at "gun-fire" every evening the amusements were discontinued, and the streets resumed the quiet, deserted appear-

ance which at night distinguishes the streets of Valetta equally with those of Cairo and other eastern cities.

The only approach to anything like license, consists in a general throwing of sugar-plums; every person carries a bag or pocketful of these, and discharges them by handfuls at the heads and faces of all whom they feel disposed to notice in this way. The ladies generally expend upon the men all their favours of this sort, while the men of course pelt away at the women. I myself became engaged in one or two such sharp contests of this kind, that when the Carnival was over, I was obliged to treat myself to a new hat.

Thursday, 29th. My plan of operations is to proceed hence to Sicily, and after remaining a short time in that island to pass over to Naples, and thence take all the principal cities of Italy in succession as I travel northwards; then to traverse France, visit Paris, and to reach England some time in June. My friends remain here a short

time longer, and afterwards go direct to England and Jersey, where I shall probably next meet them.

In consequence of the non-arrival of the steamer from Alexandria, the departure of the Naples packet was delayed all day, but at six in the evening I received notice to get on board, and soon after seven we were steaming out of the harbour with a smooth sea before us, and a clear sky and bright moon overhead.

Friday, 30th. Going early on deck, I found that we were well in with the Sicilian shore, and passing the city of Catania.

The morning was bright and cloudless, and the broad sides of *Ætna* completely unveiled, a small cloud of a singular mushroom-like form alone resting upon the snowy summit, which showed cold and clear far up against the pale early sky.

Advancing rapidly over a sea of glassy smoothness, we soon entered the strait of Messina, and here the scenery became enchanting beyond description, far exceeding



in beauty everything I have yet seen. On the Sicilian side, green mountains rise from the very shore, their slopes covered with cottages and convents, vineyards and olive grounds extending to the most inaccessible heights; towns and villages line the shore, while on the opposite side, in fine contrast with this rich scene, are the wild mountains of Calabria capped with snow.

In entering the port of Messina, we passed the once dreaded Charybdis, which, whatever were its former terrors, appears nothing very formidable now. Some pretty white gulls were swimming heedlessly upon the very spot, which is marked by a strong and peculiar ripple, and a small boat was sailing in what must have been most fearful proximity had danger existed.

Some batteries guard the narrow entrance to the harbour, which is small, but extremely deep, and of a curious circular form, like a crater. Upon the singular narrow strip of land which encloses this basin, quite separated from the city, and

almost from the mainland, is the piece of ground set apart for the Protestant burial-place, and near this I was shown the spot, where, during the prevalence of the cholera in August last, the dead were piled in heaps and burnt, so tremendous was the mortality, that it was found necessary to dispose of the corpses in this wholesale way. In less than three weeks, we are told, more than a fourth of the entire population of Messina, amounting to ninety thousand souls, fell victims to the dreadful pest, four thousand persons perishing in one day. Beyond the city it was little felt, and of the numbers who fled to the country, and took refuge in the villages and hamlets among the neighbouring hills, nearly all remained unscathed. This awful mortality is the more remarkable, as, on former occasions when Catania and Palermo have been visited by the cholera, Messina has been altogether exempted.

My baggage was very gently treated at the dogana, and this ceremony disposed of,

I, in company with some of the other passengers, secured rooms at the Hotel Vittoria di Norde, near the port, and then set out for a ramble about the town.

I had not gone far, when my feelings, or prejudices mayhap, were somewhat startled by observing two elderly gentlemen, of severe aspect and solemn demeanour, meet in the street, and with the utmost gravity deliberately kiss each other—no mere touching of foreheads or cheeks, but lip to lip, they treated one another to a smacking, sounding kiss; this done, each gravely bowed and went on his way.

Further on, finding the manufacture of macaroni going forward, I remained awhile to observe the process, which appeared extremely simple. The dough, or paste, is worked and kneaded in an extremely stiff and tough condition by means of a strong lever, and is afterwards forced by a powerful screw through a stout vertical copper cylinder of about six inches diameter, the lower extremity of which is closed with a

strong plate of the same material, pierced full of holes of a diameter and shape corresponding with the size and form of macaroni to be produced, large or small, round or flat.

When the hollow description of macaroni is to be made, a plate is used, every hole in which is fitted with a short steel wire, that, springing from the upper surface of the plate, rises about half an inch, and then is bent over, and descends straight through the centre of the hole. Under the action of the screw the tough dough is forced through these holes, and makes its appearance beneath the cylinder in the resemblance of a huge skein of yellow cord. When about a yard in length of this skein has descended, it is separated with a sharp knife, hung across a stick suspended in the sun to dry, and in a few hours the macaroni is perfected and ready for packing.

Saturday, 31st. Among my fellow-passengers in the packet from Malta was a

French gentleman, who is travelling for his pleasure, and whose plans are so much in accordance with my own, that we have determined to travel for the present together, and to make a tour through the island before proceeding onwards to Naples.

In travelling here the only choice is between saddle mules and an open carriage, the driver of which, or vetturino, engages for a specified sum to carry you to any part of the island within a given time. We chose the latter mode as that holding out the greatest promise of comfort and pleasure, the weather appearing unsettled, and we have to-day contracted with a merry, good-tempered looking Sicilian to carry us hence to Catania and Syracuse, and back again to Catania, whence to Palermo, we propose taking seats in the mail coach which traverses the island between those two points.

It is our intention to start to-morrow, should the weather permit. To-day it is

blowing a gale, and the sky is overcast and looks very threatening; but, anxious to see something of the beautiful hills that surround Messina, we engaged one of the small single-horse carriages that ply about the town, and set out along a road that is in course of construction, and which, when completed, will connect Messina more directly with Palermo on the other side of the island.

For a mile or so beyond the city we found the road nearly level, and delightfully shaded by a double line of trees, amongst which Judas trees of uncommon size and in full bloom made a splendid appearance. Quitting this beautiful avenue, the road by long traverses and numerous windings ascends the mountains that overlook the city. From the summits of these we obtained a magnificent prospect: on the one hand the Lipari isles, and the blue waters of the Mediterranean; and on the other, the city, the port, the straits, and the lofty mountains and snow-covered

peaks of Calabria; but the wind was so violent that it was with difficulty we could stand upright, and our coachman declined to take his carriage to the summit of the pass, declaring that it would be blown over. While clambering about the mountain top we met an old goatherd tending a large flock of goats; both the old man and his boy who accompanied him were clad chiefly in skins and looked wild and uncultivated as savages. We offered the boy a small piece of money, which, however, to our surprise he would not take; his reasons for declining we could not comprehend, as he spoke in a dialect to us quite unintelligible.

Sunday, April 1st. Heavy rain descending in torrents all day, rendered it impossible to go out, and our departure is necessarily deferred. Yesterday afternoon a large French steamer came in, filled with troops for the Crimea. A number of the officers joined our party at the hotel in the evening, and the excitement of their

sprightly conversation, coupled with a somewhat too lengthened investigation of the merits of various Sicilian wines, has resulted in a headache that renders me not indisposed to remain quiet to-day.



## CHAPTER XIV.

Sicilian Scenery and Roads—Calls upon the Traveller's Pocket—Gardino—City and Castle of Mola—Taormina and its Extraordinary Site—Ruins of an Amphitheatre—A Self-taught Artist—A Hostess's Perplexity—Natural Riches of the Country—Sicilian Costume—Catania, and its Antiquities—Aderno—Sufferings of Sicilian Prisoners—View of *Ætna*—Passage of a Swollen River—San Philipo d'Argiro.

MONDAY, 2nd. Our vetturino made his appearance at seven this morning, and the weather looking better, though still far from settled, we resolved to start.

The Albergo di Vittoria is by no means a bad hotel, and is a handsome and spacious house, with marble staircases and broad corridors. The table d'hôte is pretty good, and the charges very reasonable; my bill for the three days only reaching the moderate amount of twenty-two shillings. As for the beds, however, any one who is not prepared to sleep under an abominable

heavy wadded encumbrance in place of bed-clothes will find them very uncomfortable.

By eight o'clock we were clear of Messina, and entering upon scenery that must surely be the most lovely in the world: the road follows the line of the seashore, now cut in the solid rock of the beetling cliffs, and almost overhanging the breakers, and now crossing the picturesque valleys that descend abruptly to the sea from the beautiful range of heights which, alternately advancing and receding, is never far distant.

Every turn of the road brought fresh beauties to view, keeping us in a constant rapture of admiration. All that was required to perfect the loveliness of the scenery was sunshine, but that we were not destined to enjoy; on the contrary, rain came on about noon, and provokingly compelled us to close our carriage, which is a large roomy britzka, drawn by three horses harnessed abreast, and carrying about their necks strings of small bells, whose merry jingling appears to inspirit the animals,

and is not at all displeasing to our own ears. The sky cleared again, however, during the afternoon, and by the time we reached Gardino, thirty miles from Messina, and our halting-place for the night, we had again fine weather.

Tolls are levied at very frequent intervals along this road, which doubtless requires much labour to keep it in repair, by reason of the numerous broad gravelly water-courses which cross it, and which need much levelling and readjusting after every fall of rain. Numbers of men were employed in this way to-day; these also asked money upon the plea that we could not have proceeded but for their labours.

Another call upon our pockets in the shape of custom-house fees, or exactions, we encountered with perplexing and somewhat provoking frequency. At every few miles we were stopped by a well-dressed official in full military uniform, who, under the plea that we were leaving one province or entering another, that we were coming

within the jurisdiction of this city, or quitting the jurisdiction of that, intimated the necessity of examining our luggage.

In our simplicity we were, on the first occasion, about to produce our keys instead of our purses, till a wink and a whispered hint from Francisco, our charioteer, set us right. Thus enlightened, when requested to show our baggage we at once produce a two carlini piece (value eightpence), the military gentleman extends his palm, receives the money, bows with infinite grace, and retires. Assuredly *such* bows are cheap at the price; but, becoming tired of the frequent repetition of the performance, my companion at last gave only a single carlino; the military-looking gentleman, on this occasion raised his eyebrows, tossed the coin several times over in his hand, but without speaking, merely shrugged his shoulders with an expression of ineffable contempt as we passed on.

Gardino is a straggling, dirty little town close to the sea, and the appearance of the

Albergo di Vittoria is far from promising. Immediately in the rear of the town, romantically perched upon the summit of a high mountain, are the city and castle of Mola, and lower down, occupying a level space or shelf in the precipitous hill-side, is the town of Taormina; near the latter the imposing ruins of a large amphitheatre stand conspicuously upon a jutting shoulder of the mountain, and these—undeterred by the formidable ascent—we determined to visit.

Provided with donkeys, we set out without loss of time, and, after an hour's climbing by a narrow paved way, cut in zigzags up the steep acclivity, we reached Taormina; Mola being yet, to all appearance, as far above us as we now stood above Gardino.

Entering Taormina by an ancient gateway in the ruined wall, we found ourselves in a fine level street, with shops, markets, and busy throngs, and with little to remind us of its extraordinary site, except the sharpness and purity of the air, and total absence

of wheeled carriages, which are effectually excluded by the steepness of the ascent.

The fine ruins of the amphitheatre, the dimensions of which speak of the former populousness of these mountain cities, well repaid the toil encountered in reaching it. An old custode dwells near the spot in charge of some fragments and antiquities that have been dug from the ruins. The old man is a self-taught artist, and employs his leisure hours with his pencil, sketching the remarkable scenery of the neighbourhood. He had just completed a general view of Taormina and Mola, and the drawing appeared so faithful a representation of this striking and peculiar scene, that I purchased and brought it away as a memorial.

Sunset found us still lingering about this romantic spot, and the moon was shining brightly ere we regained Gardino, delighted with our excursion, and prepared to do ample justice to the fare, however homely, of the unpretending Vittoria. We found

matters not so bad as appearances led us to anticipate: our supper, consisting of boiled chicken, soup, beans, and macaroni of course, was washed down with a flask of capital red wine, the produce of the neighbourhood; and our chamber, which serves for supper and bedroom, is tolerably clean, and not uncomfortable. Intending to rise with the dawn and climb the mountain to visit Mola, before starting for Catania, we went early to bed.

Tuesday, 3rd. Day broke with a most cheerless appearance, dark, clouded, and raining. Our projected scramble up to Mola was therefore abandoned, and at an early hour we resumed our journey.

This morning, when settling for our night's lodging, our inquiry as to the amount to be paid was met by the unsatisfactory reply, "*Quanto piace i Signori*" (as much as the gentlemen please); upon this my companion offered French coins, and I English, being aware that neither pass current in Sicily, except in the prin-

cipal cities. Our pretty little hostess was in despair; but when, after unfeelingly amusing ourselves with her perplexity, we produced the much desired Sicilian piastres, her smiles and expressions of delight were unbounded. Two piastres for our entertainment, and one for the use of the donkeys, amply satisfied all demands; the Sicilian piastre is equal to four shillings English.

Beyond Gardino, the mountains receding farther from the sea, the road becomes somewhat less picturesque, but scarcely less beautiful. Passing over a fine plain, intersected by a flowing river, and covered with waving corn, with orchards, orange groves, and fields of growing flax, now gay with its beautiful blue blossoms, we reached about noon the rich undulating country that stretches in long slopes from *Ætna* down to the sea. Here the more advanced state of vegetation, the yellow tints of the corn, the sprouting vines, and apple-trees in full blossom, gave evidence of the superior qualities of the rich, black lava soil.



We stopped soon after mid-day to bait at the pretty little town of Aci Reale, upon a high ridge of lava overlooking the sea. By this time the sky had cleared, and the sun was shining hotly. It was a festa day, and as we approached the town, we met numbers of the country people coming out—they had been to mass, and were returning home; the women rode on asses, and among them were some girls whose beauty was remarkable. All were dressed in holiday attire, and here, for the first time since we landed in Sicily, we saw some approach to a distinct costume in the form of the headdress, which consists of a large piece of white woollen cloth folded many times, and laid across the crown of the head; this is rather becoming, and very convenient, as, in the event of rain, the headdress is unfolded, and then serves for a mantle.

Early in the evening we reached “La Bella Catania,” and put up at the Albergo

della Corona, where we found very comfortable quarters.

Wednesday, 4th. Intending to spend a day here on our return, we were up before dawn; Francisco desiring to start by five o'clock, as Syracuse is above fifty miles distant. The morning was clear, and the air very sharp, bringing great coats and wrappers into requisition. Soon after clearing the city gates, we entered upon a fine plain across which the road lay before us for eight miles, straight as an arrow, and bordered on either side by a hedge of cactus, or prickly pear. Beyond the plain we came to a considerable river, and here, to our great annoyance, we discovered that a freshet, the result of the late rains, had destroyed the bridge, and that farther progress in this direction was consequently impossible.

Numbers of men were employed repairing the wretched wooden structure that had served for a bridge, but as there appeared no chance of its being restored to a ser-

viceable condition in less than three or four days, we reluctantly turned back towards Catania.

We now determined to alter our plan of operations, and instead of Syracuse to visit Girgenti, and from thence go on direct to Palermo. To this end we concluded a fresh contract with Francisco; he was to have received £6 for conveying us from Messina to Syracuse, and back to Catania, and we now agreed to pay him £20 for the whole journey from Messina to Palermo, *viâ* Girgenti, he to provide us with board and lodging for the remainder of the distance, which will occupy nine days—four hence to Girgenti, one day there, and four more thence to Palermo.

We returned to Catania about nine o'clock, and were soon reinstalled at the Corona, and again under the assiduous care of Placido, the obsequious waiter, who, with mingled condolences for our disappointment, and expressions of delight at our return, speedily supplied us with a capital

breakfast, in which genuine beef steaks made a conspicuous figure.

Breakfast ended, we engaged the services of a cicerone, and set out to visit the antiquities and other objects of interest about the city. Of these, the principal are the museum of antique sculptures and other works of art, and the excavated ruins of the ancient theatre, Greek and Roman baths, and a large amphitheatre, all more or less buried beneath the successive streams of lava that have poured down from *Ætna* over this devoted spot; where, in such wonderful disregard of all warning and experience, city has risen over city, and modern Catania now stands a ready prey for some future eruption.

In the afternoon we took a carriage, and leaving the town, we traced the course of the great stream of lava which, during the eruption of 1669, threatened Catania with total destruction; but when close to the walls, dividing into two branches, the lava flowed on to the sea, encompassing the

whole city with a fiery barrier, but overwhelming only an inconsiderable portion; and this damage was in part compensated by one of the lava streams flowing far out into the sea, and in the shape of an extensive breakwater, forming a much more spacious port than that previously existing. This port has since been further improved by the addition of a fine mole of solid masonry.

In the cathedral we saw a curious, quaint old picture representing the scene during the eruption. The city is depicted encompassed by a flood of fire, and the terrified people flocking to the water, and crowding into ships and boats; all escape on the land side being effectually cut off.

In the evening we were quite overwhelmed with the visits of native artisans, or, I may say, artists bringing their wares for sale. Some little figures in terra-cotta, representing the old Sicilian costumes, we thought so beautifully executed, that, despite their very fragile appearance, we

resolved to take the chance of conveying them safely, and possessed ourselves of several.

Thursday, 5th. Last night the sky looked threatening again, and this morning we were not surprised to find rain falling steadily. Francisco urged a departure, however, and yielding to his wishes we resolved to start. Our friend Placido now brought us two large books, whose pages we found, on inspection, are filled with records of the satisfaction of grateful travellers of all nations, who during the last twelve years have enjoyed the general comforts of the Corona, and particular attentions and politeness of its incomparable waiter, who, in the words of one of these written testimonies to his worth, is concisely and not inaptly described by some facetious English traveller, as "a nice young man for a small tea party." We, of course, added our tribute of praise, thus bringing down the record of the inimit-

able Placido's perfections to this 5th of April, 1855.

After we had started, the rain came down more heavily than ever, and the road continually ascending the long slopes towards *Ætna*, our pace was slow, and the prospect somewhat cheerless and uninteresting. For some hours our course lay over the lava beds of 1669; the lapse of two centuries has produced decomposition sufficient only to restore limited portions of the surface to the purposes of cultivation. Vines are growing in small patches among the hollows and more depressed parts, where decomposition of the lava has proceeded farthest, but the rougher portions produce only a straggling crop of prickly pears, with a few olive and fig-trees, and a great deal is still perfectly bare.

So slow was our progress, that it was two o'clock ere we reached the little town of Aderno, twenty-three miles from Catania, and halted to bait our jaded horses, and to appease the cravings of our own appetites.

Here we learned that a river only five miles in advance, had since morning become impassable, so we are stopped short again, unless the weather clears; should no more rain fall, it is said the river will be fordable to-morrow.

My Parisian friend, who improves upon acquaintance, and is a very agreeable travelling companion, is equally with myself disposed to make light of mishaps and disappointments of this kind; so, hoping for better fortune for to-morrow, we strolled out after dinner in search of amusement, and entering the chapel of the convent of Santa Lucia, we heard some excellent music.

Afterwards visiting an ancient tower placed conspicuously upon a rock near the entrance to the town, we found the old keep occupied as a prison, and a dozen starved looking men incarcerated within it. These luckless captives are unprovided with beds or bedding of any sort; their fare is bread and water, and they have been four months



here confined awaiting trial. The wretched men made piteous appeals to us, as though we could help them, vowed before God that they were innocent of the offence with which they were charged, and complained that their treatment was killing them. We gave the poor creatures a piece of money, which they received with expressions of gratitude quite out of proportion with the gift. The gaoler told us that their sufferings from cold during the first winter months of their imprisonment were terrible; they were all confined upon one charge of arson.

The sky has cleared this evening, giving promise of fine weather and onward progress to-morrow.

Friday, 6th. This morning Mount *Ætna* towered above us distinct and unclouded, a certain indication, according to Francisco, of a fine day. We got off at seven, but when an hour afterwards we came in sight of the river, the unwelcome spectacle of mules and carts crowded about either bank

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told us that there was still difficulty in passing. On reaching the spot, we found the stream yet rapid and muddy, and Francisco shook his head despondingly. Laden mules were slowly crossing a short distance above the road, at a part where the water was shallower; but many of these fell in the middle of the stream, and after thoroughly wetting their loads, got upon their legs again, and reached the bank amid great shouting and tumult.

After some time, a carriage, that had been waiting upon the opposite side, was driven boldly into the stream, and without much difficulty got safely over. Thus encouraged, Francisco yielded to our persuasions, and made the attempt, but with less success, for when he reached the middle, the horses becoming alarmed, tried to turn back—one plunged and broke his traces, another fell, and all got into such confusion, that our affrighted charioteer was fain to call upon some of his countrymen to come to his assistance.

All this time the stream was rushing through the carriage like a mill-race, but we had, before attempting the passage, packed all portmanteaus, &c., high upon the seats; no damage, therefore, was sustained, and the horses having been released, and ourselves and baggage carried on men's shoulders to the opposite bank, the empty carriage was drawn over by a party of men with a long rope.

More delay now occurring while the broken harness was cobbled up, it was eleven o'clock ere we were again on our way, well pleased, however, to have cleared this formidable obstacle on any terms.

Mountains now lay before us, looking high and rugged enough to bar all further progress; but the excellent and skilfully constructed road winding along the sides of the ravines, and mounting by long traverses and numerous turns, conducted us by easy ascents to the summits of the highest ranges.

At Regalbuto, a small town perched upon a mountain top, we stopped a short time to bait, and soon afterwards passed below the extraordinary city of San Philipo d'Argiro, occupying the apex and sides of a peak so lofty as to form even in this mountainous region a conspicuous object at a great distance. As we approached, the towers, spires, and roofs of the city imparting a jagged or serrated appearance to the sides of the lofty cone, as it stood out in bold relief against the sky, produced a most striking and remarkable effect.

Notwithstanding the hilly nature of the country, the scenery is as rich as it is remarkable; the long slopes and steep acclivities, even to the tops of the mountains, are verdant with young crops of growing wheat, while olive groves and thickets are dispersed in the most natural and picturesque manner over hill and dale. Vineyards have become scarce since we crossed the river, and quitted the dark, stony lava soils of *Ætna*.

During the day we met great numbers of small, light carts drawn by a single horse, or more generally a mule, and laden with sulphur in large square cakes, the produce of the sulphur mines of Villarossa, some miles in our front.

Owing to our long detention at the river, evening overtook us before we reached our halting-place for the night; but we had the advantage of a bright moon, and at eight o'clock we drove into the town of Leonforte, twenty-eight miles from Aderno, and put up at a dirty, comfortless-looking inn, bearing the remarkable designation of "Locanda della Miserecordia."

## CHAPTER XV.

City of Castrogiovanni—The Cathedral—Unveiling of the Figure of the Saviour—The Torre del Conte—Santa Catarina—Sicilian Discomfort—Slovenly Mode of Cultivation—Unfeeling Treatment of Animals—Pack-horses and their Drivers—Canicatti—Serradifalco—Girgenti—Novel Carriage—Temples of Concord and Juno—Visit to a Sulphur Mine—Employment of Children.

SATURDAY, 7th. Appearances did not belie our resting-place of last night; we were tormented with fleas, and besides suffered much from cold, though, in being without fireplaces, the Miserecordia only resembles all other small Sicilian inns; but last night was unusually sharp, the air of these high-land regions being extremely piercing, and the miserable pan of embers made a sorry substitute for a fireside. The heavy quilted abomination, too, that is everywhere given us instead of bed clothes, would, without the addition of fleas and other disagreeables, render the nights sufficiently uncom-

fortable to detract materially from the pleasures of our journey. I would recommend all travellers in Sicily to go provided with a good pair of blankets.

Our route to-day was as hilly as that of yesterday: the road, often following the crests of the highest ranges, commanded a succession of the most charming landscapes and extensive views.

Early in the afternoon we approached the remarkable city of Castrogiovanni, once famous, under its ancient name of Enna, for its Temple of Ceres, and still noted for the superior quality of the wheat produced in its neighbourhood. The city, which is yet a place of some importance and extent, possessing a population of twelve thousand souls, occupies the level summit of a mountain, not only the highest in this part of the island, but so steep as to appear at a distance nearly perpendicular at the upper part. The main road passes along the side of this mountain at a considerable elevation, but yet far below the city.

Having the day before us, however, we were not disposed to pass so remarkable a place without a visit; therefore desiring Francisco to proceed on to the Albergo di Nepotenza, the place he had named for our mid-day halt, and which was now only about a couple of miles in advance, my friend and I turned off upon an ancient paved mule track that led directly up the hillside, and after half-an-hour's laborious climbing, gaining the plateau, we passed an ancient gateway, and at once found ourselves, as if by enchantment, in the streets of a busy city, filled with throngs of well-dressed people; this being a great festa day, the last of the Passion Week.

The churches were open and mass going forward. Being invited to enter, we went into the cathedral, and remained to witness the ceremony of unveiling the figure of the Saviour, which during Lent is concealed from view. An immense curtain descending from the lofty roof to the pavement screened the altar and crucifix, and entirely closed



the chancel, and this we were told would be removed with great ceremony at noon; in the meanwhile, guided by one who offered his services as cicerone, we made a survey of the church, which is large and handsome, and contains some interesting antique marble bass-reliefs.

Castrogiovanni is not, I fancy, very frequently visited by foreigners; at least the curiosity with which we were regarded, would lead to that conclusion; boys followed us, gaping and gazing, wherever we went, and when we stood still, came before us and looked wonderingly up in our faces.

The church was filled with a numerous congregation, amongst the fair portion of which were several faces of uncommon beauty; but, I fear, our intrusion sadly disturbed the pious duties of many. Curiosity proved too strong for devotion, and while the lips moved in prayer, numerous inquisitive eyes followed the strangers.

As the clock struck twelve, the immense curtain that veiled the altar suddenly

dropped, the powerful orchestra opened with a crash, and all the bells of the city, released from long silence, pealed forth at once. The effect was thrilling; I lingered listening to the beautiful music as long as the limited time at our disposal, and the impatience of my friend would permit, and then followed him reluctantly away; nor shall I readily forget the rare beauty of those fair Sicilians, or the fine burst of music on that strange mountain top.

The salubrity of the climate of Castrogiovanni is attested by the bright, ruddy complexions of the inhabitants, who, moreover, assured us that their city is considered a safe place of refuge from cholera.

The abundance of water on this lofty and isolated plateau is remarkable; springs issue from the ground in many places, and tanks and pools are numerous.

The Torre del Conte, a Norman ruin, occupies the site of the famed temple of Ceres, and so commanding is the situation, that even this small tower is visible at the dis-

tance of a day's journey. It was long past mid-day when we reluctantly quitted this remarkable city, and after a rapid descent by a rough-paved mule track, similar to that by which we had ascended, we rejoined Francisco, who was impatiently expecting us at the Nepotenza, about two o'clock, and after a hurried meal, and a draught of very light but refreshing wine, the produce of the district, we proceeded on our way.

The day was bright and warm, but we had not long descended from Castrogiovanni, when dense clouds settled down upon the city, and completely enveloping the mountain, so remained for the rest of the evening, though we below continued to enjoy uninterrupted sunshine to the close of the day, when we reached the small town of Santa Catarina, thirty-four miles from Leonforte.

Bad as was our accommodation last night, the prospect is worse here—more fleas and more dirt—the chilly floor of red tiles looks as though it had never known a broom, and

the filthy, stained walls may have been ignorant of paint or whitewash since the house was built.

The landlady, fat, dirty, and cross, was in such an ill-temper as the arrival of guests even, failed to mollify, supper was tardily prepared, and we sat longer than usual shiveringly expecting the pan of hopelessly smouldering embers that does duty as a fire: in truth, these miserable nights form a serious counterpoise to the delightful days, and materially diminish the enjoyment of travelling in this beautiful island.

Sunday, 8th. We rose as usual at dawn, and after a hurried breakfast, gladly quitted our miserable quarters, and turned our backs upon Santa Catarina at seven o'clock. A heavy thunder shower which fell last night, has rendered the road somewhat wet and disagreeable for walking, as we generally do up all the long hills.

Though now quite in the interior of Sicily, we have as yet seen little approach to a peculiar costume; the peasantry are

dressed much like English, or, I should rather say Irish people of the same class: the women wear ordinary dresses of Manchester print, with a coloured kerchief over the head, and are generally very dirty in dress and person.

The country over which we passed to-day, though hilly, is less mountainous and rugged than that previously traversed, and is almost exclusively devoted to the production of wheat. Few vineyards are seen in this part of the island, and olive trees have nearly disappeared; the mode of cultivation is very slovenly and wasteful, one crop only being produced in three years. The first year the stubble land remains untouched, and produces a scanty supply of pasture, the second year it is ploughed and fallowed, and the third sown again with wheat.

The Sicilian plough is of the same rude construction as that used in Egypt, and whether oxen, horses, or mules be employed to draw it, they are invariably attached by

means of a yoke. The effect upon the horses and mules of such a mode of harnessing, is as might be anticipated; their necks, notwithstanding a quantity of clumsy padding, are generally in a terribly galled and injured state. We saw some wretched animals whose withers were not merely raw, but deeply cut into by the cruel yoke, and yet the creatures in this maimed condition were still at work. The Sicilians generally are very unfeeling in the treatment of their animals, appearing in this respect in disadvantageous contrast with the Maltese.

Much of the transport of produce and goods of all descriptions in this hilly country is conducted by means of pack-horses, carrying immense panniers, between which the driver almost invariably sits, mercilessly retaining his place, however heavy the load, even when ascending the steepest hills; yet the Sicilian men have by no means an idle or slothful appearance—they are hard-featured, wiry, and active, and generally as lean and ragged-looking as their beasts.

At Serradifalco, we halted for awhile to bait as usual about mid-day, and as the bright unclouded sun was sinking in the west, we reached Canicatti, a considerable town of eighteen thousand inhabitants, and here we put up at the Albergo Nobile, which, though dirty and comfortless, is not quite so wretched as our resting-place of last night.

Monday, 9th. Francisco was as usual early astir, and urging a timely departure. We quitted Serradifalco rather before our usual hour of seven, and after traversing twenty-five miles of the same uninteresting wheat-producing country as that passed over yesterday, ridge succeeding ridge in tiresome monotony, we reached Girgenti about noon.

As we approached the town, we met one of the extraordinary carriages which, prior to the completion, about thirty years ago, of the fine road upon which we are travelling, were in general use throughout the interior of the island. The carriage has no wheels,

but is carried by two stout mules, one of which is placed between shafts in the ordinary way, and goes before, whilst the other follows the machine with his head towards it, being harnessed between an extra pair of shafts, which project in the rear like the handles of a wheelbarrow; the mules are profusely adorned with gay trappings, and carry a multitude of jingling bells. With these carriages the worst roads of this mountainous island may be safely traversed; but the pace is slow, and the motion, judging from appearances, must be tiresome and fatiguing.

Girgenti, occupying a part of the site of the ancient Agrigentum, is perched upon the summit of a hill of considerable elevation, about four miles from the sea. It is a dirty, neglected-looking place, badly supplied with water, and only interesting on account of the fine ruins of the ancient city that are to be seen in the neighbourhood.

The “ Albergo bello di Napoli e Sicilia,”



though by no means worthy of its ostentatious title, is more comfortable than the odious styes in which we have lately been compelled to lodge, and having resolved to remain here all to-morrow, we attempted nothing this afternoon beyond a ramble about the town; the dull, cloudy sky, and the bitter cold wind, however, soon disposed us to turn homeward again to seek the shelter of our cheerless little room, and the poor comfort of the usual pan of embers. The unwonted sumptuousness of our evening's fare, however, comprising fish, flesh, and fowl, which our indefatigable and good-humoured Fráncisco placed before us with no small display of pride and, satisfaction, proved a solid consolation, and, added to the immunity from fleas and other vermin, helped us to pass the evening less disagreeably than usual.

Tuesday, 10th. After an early breakfast we procured a carriage, and set out to visit the principal ruins, which occupy a ridge considerably less elevated than that upon

which the modern city stands, and much nearer the sea.

The most conspicuous ruins are those of the fine temples of Concord and Juno, which are both in a wonderful state of preservation, the roofs alone being destroyed. Standing upon a rocky elevation which presents a precipitous face towards the shore, the appearance of these temples from the sea must have been beautiful in the extreme. The ruins of several others, some of very large proportions, but quite overthrown, occupy the same ridge, and speak of departed grandeur and magnificence.

We spent the greater part of the day wandering among these silent yet eloquent memorials of by-gone greatness, or sitting upon the disjointed stones, to enjoy at once the warm sunshine, and those feelings of saddened interest which the scene was so calculated to excite.

Returning to the town, we visited in the evening the public promenade or garden, which is planted with gaudy common flowers,

and laid out in the most formal style with terraces, labyrinths, and grottoes; but, owing to its beautiful commanding situation, the effect is altogether pleasing. We met very few persons in the gardens, though the evening was particularly fine.

Wednesday, 11th. We got away at an early hour, and turned our backs upon Girgenti, well pleased with our visit. The ruins we have seen are, we believe, among the most perfect of the Greek temples now existing, and inferior only to those at Athens and Pæstum.

The weather has again become bitterly cold, dark, and windy; and, as our journey to-day was over the same road we traversed on Monday, the only interesting incident was a visit to one of the numerous sulphur mines which abound in this part of the country. The descent into the mines is accomplished by means of rude steps formed in the side of the shaft, which is sunk not perpendicularly but at a considerable angle. In the mine that we visited, which is a

newly opened one, the bed of sulphur ore appears to be of great and, indeed, unascertained thickness, for the galleries are worked out as high as the miners can reach, and yet both floor and ceiling are everywhere composed of the ore. The matrix is a hard greyish stone, through which the yellow mineral is disseminated in streaks and blotches, in appearance reminding one of very fat beef.

About a dozen men, naked to their waists, were working in the mine, and, to our surprise, we found them not only using open lamps, but so little in fear of the sulphur igniting that one of them, by way of proving to us the rich quality of the ore, set fire to the sides and roof of the gallery several times, when, after allowing the flame to spread for a few moments, a single blast of his breath was always sufficient to extinguish it. The profuse expressions of gratitude with which these poor men received a single piastre, which we gave to be divided among them,

seemed to prove that their earnings are but small.

To extract the sulphur the ore is placed in pits much resembling lime-kilns, and a lighted match having been inserted at the *top* of the mass the whole is covered with a coating of earth, and the smouldering fire, thus confined, gradually spreads and descends. The sulphur as it becomes melted is drawn off by a plug hole in the lower part of the kiln, and in eight or ten days the whole is thus extracted, and the kiln burnt out.

The ore is brought up from the mine in the most primitive and laborious mode by boys, carrying baskets upon their backs; of the numbers we saw thus engaged none appeared to be above twelve or fourteen years old, and, as they climbed panting up the steep incline of the shaft, many seemed much distressed with the severity of the labour.

Throughout our journey I have been much struck by observing the extent to

which children are usefully employed in this island; they appear to enjoy no childhood, no happy days of immunity from care and toil. The labourers engaged in breaking stones and repairing the roads, we have noticed, are generally boys or quite young lads, while in the towns and villages little girls of the tenderest years emulate the incessant thread-spinning habits of their mothers, and like them, whether sitting at the cottage-door, walking on the road, or tending a few sheep or cows upon the stubble field, they invariably carry in their little hands, instead of a doll or other plaything, a tiny distaff, from which, with surprising expertness, they produce their modicum of thread.

So much time was consumed by our visit to the sulphur mines that, although we delayed but a short time to bait at Canicatti, it was dark ere we reached Caltanissetta, a large and handsome town forty-six miles from Girgenti, and the

capital of a province. Here at the Aquila Nera we found cleaner and more comfortable quarters than we have elsewhere met with since leaving Catania; but still the cheerful fireside was wanting, and the evening being very chilly we had no resource but to get early to bed.

## CHAPTER XVI.

Monotony of the Landscape—Vallelunga—Sicilian Musicians and their National Airs—Palermo—Dried Specimens of Sicilian Humanity—Beautiful Situation of Palermo—Embarkation for Naples—Police Annoyance—A Russian Countess—The Gulf of Naples.

THURSDAY, 12th. Towards noon we regained the Palermo road, and passing our old place of torment, Santa Catarina, entered upon new ground, but without finding any improvement in the scenery. The almost total absence of detached cottages or small hamlets in these treeless, corn-growing districts of the interior, renders yet more dreary the naked aspect of their monotonous green landscapes. The peasants chiefly dwell in the large villages or towns, which, though numerous, are necessarily too remote from each other to be generally in view, and are frequently at a most in-



convenient distance from the lands cultivated by their inhabitants.

We frequently in the evenings overtake parties of labourers returning home four or five miles from the scene of their toil; they are generally mounted on asses, and carry all their tools and implements with them. During the day the donkeys are to be seen tethered and regaling upon the succulent and abundant wild herbage which springs up by the roadside, and everywhere covers the waste ground.

Much of the land we passed over to-day is fallowed or lying waste, and is grazed by sheep and cattle, which we saw in larger numbers than we had previously observed; some flocks of sheep, of which a large proportion were black, numbered three or four hundred strong. The cattle are ugly brutes, of a smoky red colour, and with immense cocked horns. The meat in Sicily, both mutton and beef, is tough, lean, and bad, like that of Egypt and Turkey, and from the same cause.

The sun shone brightly all day, and in the afternoon, our road descending into a fine deep valley, the heat became quite oppressive. Towards evening, we were delighted to find ourselves again among vineyards, gardens, and olive groves, as we approached the little town of Vallelunga, prettily situated on the banks of a small river; and here, having accomplished thirty-four miles, we pulled up for the night.

Friday, 13th. A lovely, bright spring morning showed the beautiful scenery around Vallelunga to the fullest advantage; but we soon left it behind, and again got among the wide, dreary, unenclosed wheat lands. Villages are becoming more scarce, and we baited to-day, as yesterday, at a solitary post-house by the wayside.

Some fine lofty rocks surmounting the long, cultivated slopes, relieved the monotony of the landscape this afternoon; but the country is less rich, and displays a larger extent of rocky and unavailable

surface than any we have seen since passing the lava streams of *Ætna*.

The warm sun was still high above the western horizon when we completed our day's journey of thirty-six miles, and reached the village of Villafrati. Here we found better quarters than appearances led us to anticipate, and the sudden change in the weather makes us independent of a fire. We are in high spirits, too, at the prospect of reaching Palermo to-morrow; for to all the pleasures of travelling in this beautiful country there are so many drawbacks that we shall not be sorry to terminate our journey.

As we were sitting down to supper we were agreeably surprised by melodious sounds of music at the door of our chamber. The musicians were two poor blind Sicilians, who played well and sang several of their national airs. We detained them all the evening to entertain us, and my lively French companion caused great merriment by dancing a tarantella with the old one-eyed *cameriera*.

Saturday, 14th. The sun came forth gloriously this morning, and as the day advanced his fierce rays became scorching and oppressive. Two days ago, wrapped in great coats and shawls, we were glad to warm our chilled limbs by leaving our vehicle and walking, whenever a long ascent afforded us the opportunity; to-day I felt oppressed with heat, carrying my coat upon my arm and walking in my shirt-sleeves.

For the first time since we have been in Sicily, the breeze to-day is devoid of a certain peculiar icy sharpness, making itself felt particularly about the neck; even the natives appear sensible of this, for all, we have observed, wear upon that part of their person some kind of warm wrapper or covering, which they do not remove even when the sun shines hotly.

As we approached the coast and Palermo, the scenery again became varied and beautiful in the extreme; the broad unenclosed green expanse of corn-land here gives place

to olive plantations, vineyards, and orange groves; numerous cottages again dot the landscape, and at every few miles a village is seen high up the hillside, nestling among trees, or occupying a sheltered nook at the foot of some towering crag.

We reached Palermo about noon, and put up at the Trinacria, a spacious, handsome hotel, finely situated near the water, and commanding a beautiful view of the port and bay. Here we found most excellent quarters; and were not sorry to learn that the Naples packet does not leave before Tuesday, as we are quite disposed to enjoy for awhile the unwonted luxury of this comfortable hotel, and wish to devote a few days to the sights and pleasures of Palermo.

We passed the evening very agreeably at the theatre, where we found good acting, a large handsome house, and in the boxes a display of beauty that we thought fully justified all the glowing encomiums we had heard of the surpassing charms of the fair *Palermetáne*.

Sunday, 15th. Our first business this morning was to settle with Francisco, who returns to Messina. He is such a merry, good-tempered fellow, and has throughout the journey been so attentive, and evinced so constant a desire to please, that we really part with him with feelings of regret, the which—if there be any truth in vows and protestations—are fully reciprocated on his part. The honest fellow really appeared affected when he took leave and departed.

Among the objects of interest we visited to-day, the most remarkable was a large vault, or catacomb, attached to a convent of Capuchin friars, and which contains near six thousand human bodies. The greater part of these are exposed to view, placed in rows against the walls; and as the light is freely admitted by means of glazed openings in the roof, the whole of the ghastly ranks are clearly visible, and show with hideous effect as one enters the vaults. These disgusting dried specimens

of humanity are in every stage of mouldering decay; all bear about their withered necks a card, upon which is inscribed the name and age of the deceased, and date of death; these go back as far as the year 1611; and we observed one shrivelled figure, bearing date 1622, still nearly entire, and in a good state of preservation; yet the corpses, we were assured, are not subjected to any preservative or embalming process, further than being placed for one year in small airtight chambers, which are hermetically closed.

These vaults are open, we were told, to all who desire to dispose of their mortal remains in this extraordinary mode, upon payment of a certain fee, which, in some cases, is as low as one and a half piastres, or six shillings. Strange to relate, many appear to avail themselves of this privilege. Several female corpses, generally under glass, are seen among the collection; and upon a sort of upper shelf, numbers of young children, whose hideous, distorted

forms, are, as if in frightful mockery, clothed and decked with tawdry finery; kid gloves dangle upon the skeleton fingers, and caps with ribbons render more ghastly and revolting the eyeless sockets and grinning jaws beneath them. Yet this, we were told, is the work of the mothers and relations, who are admitted once a year to visit departed friends, and change their loathsome vestments.

On the pavement of the vaults, long piles of trunks and boxes of every form, except that of a coffin, contain the dried remains of those who have not stipulated for the posthumous distinction of exhibiting their decaying humanity to the public gaze.

Monday, 16th. The situation of Palermo is beautiful in the extreme; the fine bay in front, a picturesque range of lofty hills in the rear, and the whole of the rich plain encircled by these hills covered with villas, gardens, and orange groves, form altogether a scene of the most surpassing loveliness, as viewed from the gardens of



the Convent of Santa Maria di Jesu, which we visited to-day, and which occupies a fine commanding situation upon a slope of the mountain that borders the plain, about five miles distant from the city. Some forty or fifty of the poor of the dwellers in the neighbourhood were at the convent, receiving their daily alms of bread and beans; we were surprised to observe that all were females, but the matter was soon explained. To-morrow all who come for alms will be of the other sex; the men and women are received, it appears, upon alternate days, an arrangement which leaves room for suspicion as to the strict observance of their vows of continence by the holy friars.

During the afternoon we hurried over some of the public buildings, and several of the fine churches, with which Palermo abounds; and in the evening visited the very pretty public gardens which adjoin the city, and are beautifully situated near the bay. The Naples steamer has come

in, and as she leaves to-morrow we are anxious to make the most of our time.

Tuesday, 17th. The morning was consumed in a last hurried sight-seeing ramble through the city; and, at three o'clock, bidding a reluctant farewell to enchanting Palermo; and the comfortable Trinacria, we hurried on board the Vesuvio Neapolitan steamer, which was reported to be on the point of starting, and as all strangers were ordered ashore a few minutes after we boarded her, we congratulated ourselves upon having just hit the time. A fearful amount of kissing was exchanged among the male portion of the assembly at parting; and, in the midst of the confusion, a young Palermetan gentleman, whose acquaintance we had made since arriving here, and who insisted on coming to see us off, so took me by surprise as to bring his lips in contact with my cheek before I was aware of his design.

The ship having been cleared, we, in our simplicity, supposed she would imme-

diately get under weigh, but in this we were egregiously mistaken, for no sooner had we sought refuge from the sun's rays, and comfortably disposed ourselves upon the couches in the saloon, than we were hunted up again by a police functionary, and for two mortal hours were, without distinction—first class, second class, and deck passengers, some seventy or eighty in all—kept standing, indiscriminately mingled together, upon the deck, broiling under the hot sun, while a most vexatiously slow and deliberate examination of our passports, and muster of our persons, was gone through

It was near five o'clock when we at length steamed out of the bay; but the sea being delightfully calm, all petty annoyances were soon forgotten, and good humour restored.

Among the passengers is a Russian lady of high rank, the Countess O——f, who after dinner smoked her cigar with a most confidant and easy grace. In figure, the

countess is tall and graceful, and though a little *passé*, she is still a very handsome woman.

In the saloon is a piano in very tolerable tune, and several of the lady passengers giving us the advantage of their musical acquirements, and sweet Italian voices, the evening passed agreeably and rapidly away.

Wednesday, 18th. At an early hour the snow-clad peaks of the Apennines were in sight; and before the sun had long risen, passing between the Islands of Capri and Ischia, we advanced up the Gulf of Naples, whose beauties were enviously veiled by a warm blue haze, and entering Naples' famous bay, we cast anchor at nine o'clock in the inner harbour. Here we were destined to undergo still more protracted vexations and difficulties than those of yesterday, for though we anchored at nine, it was twelve o'clock before we could obtain the necessary written permission to land.

Wearied and out of temper with this annoying three hours' detention, we at length got ashore in no humour to be pleased, and our first impressions of Naples disappointed our expectations, as did also appearances at the Hôtel de Genève, to which I was led by my friend. Clouds of blinding dust swept along the streets, and rendered riding or walking equally disagreeable; and, after a short ramble about the principal streets and squares, we returned to our hotel as evening closed, by no means delighted with our first experience of Naples.

## CHAPTER XVII.

Visit to Capri—The Blue Grotto—The Twelve Palaces of Tiberius—Bird-catching—Wine and Beauty—Return to Naples—Wonders of Pompeii—The Bourbon Museum—Tomb of Virgil—Tunnel of Posilipo—Site of the Temple of Serapis—Ascent of Vesuvius—The Hermitage—Summit of the Volcano: its Sublime Desolation—View from Vesuvius.

THURSDAY, 19th. Learning that a small steamer runs every Thursday to convey excursionists to Capri, we resolved to make a visit to that island our business for the day, and breakfasting betimes we got on board and started soon after eight.

The sun shone brightly, and the morning was delightfully clear and fresh as we left the harbour, and glided out into the calm waters of the bay; and now, indeed, it seemed that all I had ever dreamt of Italy's blue waters, sunny skies, and enchanting scenery, was fully realized, and I could only

wonder at yesterday's jaundiced feeling of discontent.

At noon we reached the beautiful island, the object of our excursion, and the vessel, before approaching the landing-place, lay to off the famous Blue Grotto. Several small boats were soon alongside, and in one of these we at once made for its entrance, a narrow opening in the base of the rocky cliff, and so low, that we were compelled to stoop as our boat entered; this narrow portal passed, however, the appearance within is surprising and beautiful beyond description. The water upon which you float, the roof and sides of the Grotto, the boats, and all objects within this singular cave appear tinged with a deep azure blue.

Several other boats were in the Grotto at the same time with ours, and the agitation of the water caused by the dip of their oars, produced a changing variety of shades, from deep violet to light silvery blue, that had a most charming effect.

With half a piastre we bribed a boy to

jump overboard; and as he swam and dived about in the cave he appeared like some bright-coloured sea-monster, an aquatic impersonation of blue devils.

The beautiful tints that pervade the Grotto are supposed to be caused by the sun's light entering through the water, which in this locality is of a singularly deep blue colour. The small aperture by which the cave is entered extends deep down under the surface of the water, and thus the light comes chiefly from below.

Leaving the *Grotta Azzura*, we returned on board the steamer, and proceeding to the landing-place, got ashore without delay; and after a hurried meal at the little inn, whose modest appearance, and ostentatious title of "Hôtel de Londres," are somewhat at variance, we climbed the lofty promontory of *Lo Capo*, which constitutes the eastern extremity of Capri, to visit the ruins of one of the twelve palaces built by the Emperor Tiberius upon the island. The ruins



occupy a most commanding position upon the summit of the promontory, which falls off perpendicularly to the sea; and near them is pointed out *Il Salto*, the spot whence the victims of Tiberius were precipitated into the sea. This famous "leap" is a sheer descent of seven hundred feet, and a more awful fate than the being thrown, or compelled to leap over, could not be imagined; boats sailing below appeared literally no larger than nut-shells.

One of the chief present avocations of the people of the island would appear to be bird-catching. We saw everywhere cages full of wretched fluttering larks and linnets, destined, I believe, for the Naples market; and one of the miserable little captives, dangled by a thread attached to its wing, is almost as unfailingly seen here in the hands of every little girl, as were the more useful distaffs in Sicily.

Capri is celebrated for the excellence of its wine, and beauty of its women; the former we tested at the Hôtel de Londres,

and think it deserves its fame; and among the crowd that followed us to the beach when preparing to re-embark, I observed one girl whose face was, I think, the most lovely I ever looked upon.

A young Englishman of good family, a Mr. N——n, who some time since came to Capri upon a shooting excursion, was so captivated, that he married one of the island beauties and settled among them; his house was pointed out to us during our ramble. It is told that the mother prior to the marriage, exacted a promise from the bridegroom, that her daughter should not be compelled against her wish to wear shoes and stockings.

We were recalled on board the steamer at half-past three, and soon after the red sun had sank beyond the heights of Ischia, we found ourselves again in the noisy streets of Naples.

Friday, 20th. To-day we explored the wonders of Pompeii. A railroad from Naples passes near its walls, but having

missed the early train we took a cabriolet: the drive occupied two hours. Wonderful indeed is the appearance of the recovered city thus brought to light in all its completeness and reality, after eighteen centuries of concealment and changeless repose; but in no respect, perhaps, does it strike one as being more wonderful than in its fresh and lifelike aspect.

The smooth, hard pavements are marked by the passage of wheels; numerous groups of visitors supply population to the streets and squares; and the walls of the buildings look so perfect and uninjured, and the paintings and decorations within the houses so bright and recent, that it seems as though but few years or months can have passed since their chambers were tenanted. In one house, supposed to have been a baker's, is a large oven, in nowise differing from a baker's oven of the present day, and in the same apartment are some broken flour-mills of a very curious construction.

So large an extent has been excavated

and cleared, and so inconsiderable was the depth at which the city was buried, that when looking down the straight and narrow streets, the view is generally closed, not as one would anticipate by an earthen bank, the limit of the excavation, but by the mountains and features of the distant landscape. Vesuvius is conspicuously seen in this way, closing the vista of one of the principal thoroughfares.

No one can view Pompeii without feeling surprise that the city should have remained so long concealed; the overwhelming mass nowhere reaches far above the tops of the houses, and it is known that the walls of one of the theatres were never completely buried; yet Pompeii, with all its treasures in painting and sculpture, was lost to the world for seventeen hundred years, and for centuries its very site was a matter for speculation and dispute.

The walls have been traced throughout their whole extent, but during the hundred years that have elapsed since the excava-

tions were begun, not more than a fourth of the city has been cleared. Excavation is still proceeding but slowly, and on a very limited scale.

Leaving Pompeii, we reached an adjacent railway station just in time for the train, and in less than an hour returned to Naples.

Saturday, 21st. My companion of the last three weeks, M. D——n, parted from me to-day, and took a passage for Marseilles, *en route* to Paris. I went with my friend to see him off, but was stopped by a military official when about to mount the gangway of the steamer; none, I found, were allowed to go on board but the passengers, who were provided with a written permission to depart. Thus it is, it would appear, equally difficult to enter or quit the dominions of il Rè delle Bombe, as the subjects of his majesty of the two Sicilies delight to call him, in bitter allusion to his unsparing measures of coercion during the insurrections of 1848-9.

As soon as I had taken leave of my friend, I removed from the Genève, and located myself at the fine hotel "des Isles Britannique," on the Chiaja, a beautiful situation facing the bay.

Wednesday, 25th. The last three days have been chiefly devoted to the wonders of the Museo Borboneco, whose extensive galleries of paintings and antique sculptures, besides an immense collection of frescoes, bronzes, tools, utensils, and objects of every kind recovered from Pompeii and Herculaneum, afford endless occupation and amusement. The—to me—novel pleasure of studying fine pictures and marbles, I find even more engrossing and delightful than I had anticipated.

Yesterday afternoon I visited the tomb of Virgil, and afterwards passing through the fine ancient tunnel of Posilipo, went as far as Pozzuoli, the site of the celebrated Serapeon, or temple of Serapis, famous for its three fine columns forty feet high, yet standing erect, although they bear un-

mistakable evidence of having been for a long period submerged to near half their height beneath the waves of the sea, that now only washes up to their base.

The day was dark and bitterly cold, but this morning when the sun rose in a cloudless sky, all Naples was in astonishment at beholding the mountains in every direction covered with snow; even the smoking summit of Vesuvius is capped with white. Such a phenomenon has not, it is said, been seen at this season for many years.

The bright sun, and extremely clear and favourable state of the atmosphere, determined me to make my projected ascent of Vesuvius to-day, and accordingly soon after breakfast, I set out in one of the comfortable little four-wheeled single horse vehicles that are so numerous and so cheap here; the fare for a course in the city is a carlino and a-half, or about sixpence, and by the hour about tenpence for the first, and sevenpence for subsequent hours.

Reaching Resina in a little more than

an hour, I there obtained a guide and a mule, and leaving the modern carriage road which ascends to the Hermitage by long circuitous windings, took the old rough track which leads from Resina directly up the mountain, through groves of almond and olive trees, and vineyards producing the famous *Lachryma Christi* wine.

In about an hour and a-half we gained the Hermitage, beyond which the path, though less precipitous, is extremely rugged, winding among blocks and heaps of dark lava and scoria for about a mile, to the *Atrio del Cavallo*, a small, ashy plain separating the summit of Monte Somma from the great cone or crater of Vesuvius. From this point the ascent is necessarily performed on foot: dismounting, and adding my beast to a crowd of horses, donkeys, and mules already here collected, I was immediately beset by a couple of the attendants who are always in waiting at this part of the mountain, to press their services upon travellers. These fellows would fain per-



suade me that I could not climb the mountain without their help, and invited me to lay hold of long straps which they carried, that they might thus drag me forward; finding, however, that I was determined to proceed unassisted, they at length ceased their importunities, and leaving me, hurried down to meet a fresh party, among whom were some ladies, that could now be seen arriving on the little plain.

As I toiled on over the loose surface of black stones and scoria, which often gave way under my feet, and made the ascent very fatiguing, I could perceive far up the mountain side above me, groups of travellers slowly climbing, whilst others, having satisfied their curiosity, were passing briskly down.

Frequently resting to take breath, I could watch the proceedings of the people below; the ladies placed in a sort of open sedan chairs, came on up the steep, each borne by four men; and to one who rather piques himself upon his activity, it was somewhat

mortifying to observe, that hampered with these heavy and cumbrous burthens, the chair bearers were positively gaining upon me.

However, after forty minutes' severe toil I reached the summit, when a scene of the wildest and most sublime desolation at once burst upon my view. The mountain top is rent and divided by three distinct craters—those of 1838 and 1850, besides a recent one formed within the last few weeks by the falling in of the surface, but from which nothing but steam and smoke have as yet issued. These several craters are divided from each other by narrow ridges covered with deep incrustations of sulphur, and rent with numerous small fissures, from whence issue scalding steam and sulphurous vapours. No fire nor boiling lava are at present visible, the craters are silent and tranquil, and at the bottom of that of 1838, lies a quantity of snow. The guides gave no hope of an eruption at present.

The view from Vesuvius, embracing the city and bay of Naples with its numerous

islands, and extending over the Campania away to the distant snow-capped Apennines, is magnificent beyond description, and would in itself fully compensate the toil of the ascent.

Having perambulated the borders of the several craters, and gone through the usual ceremony of eating eggs cooked in the steam of one of the numerous fissures, we rapidly descended to the Atrio del Cavallo, returned to Resina, and by six o'clock reached Naples, highly delighted with the day's excursion.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

Vesuvius in Eruption—Pleasant Excitement in Naples—  
Visit to Vesuvius by Night—The Company on the  
Road—A River of Glowing Lava—Flights of Red-hot  
Stones—Visit of King Bomba to Vesuvius—Progress of  
the Lava—The Noises of Naples—Preparations for  
Departure.

TUESDAY, May 1st. Since Wednesday last I have devoted the greater part of my time to the seductive galleries of the Museo Borboneco, and have besides made a second excursion to Pompeii, and visited Herculaneum, where, however, the excavations are upon so limited a scale that, after Pompeii, they are seen with little interest.

I had intended to leave Naples to-day, and to make a trip to Salerno and Pæstum; but a difficulty about my passport prevented my getting away—a disappointment that I do not now regret, for as we were sitting at dinner this evening, at the table

d'hôte, one of the waiters, running suddenly into the room in great excitement, announced that the slumbering fires of Vesuvius had once more broken forth.

We all jumped to our feet, and hurrying out beheld, to our infinite delight, the mountain in full eruption. A huge red luminous cloud covered its summit, and a fiery stream of lava was already pouring down upon the side towards the city, and making in the darkness a magnificent appearance.

For the last two days the weather had been cloudy and thick, shutting out the mountains from view; the commencement of the eruption was consequently not perceived, and it has now burst upon us in its grandeur, and taken all Naples by surprise.

Considering the frequency with which the phenomenon has been repeated during past years, it appears astonishing that an eruption of Vesuvius should occasion so much excitement and pleasure among the

Neapolitans. No sooner was the fire perceived than the vetturini were all in activity, and throughout the evening crowded vehicles have been dashing through the streets, all making for the scene of action. For my part, I am content to defer my visit till to-morrow, by which time the eruption will most probably have attained still grander proportions.

I was not a little surprised this evening, by meeting, at the table d'hôte, our late able and popular Colonial Secretary at Sydney, whose familiar face and friendly greeting were doubly welcome in this land of strangers.

Wednesday, 2nd. Wishing to visit Vesuvius by night, when all the phenomena of the eruption appear to much greater advantage than during the day, I deferred my departure till late in the afternoon, when, in company with a Mr. L——, an English gentleman with whom I became acquainted a few days ago, I set off in a light carriage, drawn by a pair of stout horses, and with

which our vetturino engaged to carry us up to the Hermitage.

Numberless vehicles of every build, from a coach to a donkey-cart, thronged the road, all making for the point of general attraction. At Resina the wayside was lined with women and girls, laughing and joking, and gaily soliciting alms from the numerous passengers. Indeed, an eruption of Vesuvius, instead of being looked upon by the people of the neighbourhood with the feelings of dread and apprehension which strangers would be disposed to anticipate, seems to be regarded chiefly as an event promising a large influx of visitors from all parts of Europe, with a proportionate circulation of cash, and is therefore a signal for general holiday-making and merriment.

As we approached the mountain, the road became steep and heavy, and our progress slow. Night soon closed in, and the scene then became wild and interesting in the extreme; the moon had not yet risen, and the lurid glow of the volcano,

reflected upon the heavy clouds above, seemed but to increase the surrounding darkness. Shouts, songs, and laughter filled the air; the road became steeper, and the crowds and general confusion increased; drivers flogged and swore; some stuck fast, detached their horses, and gave up in despair.

Priests, in their broad, three-cornered hats; artisans and labourers, in their working dresses; people of all sorts and conditions; men, women, and children, mounted on horses, mules, and asses, or trudging on foot, swarmed up the winding road. Some carried flaming torches, some fruit or drinks for sale, and all chatted, joked, shouted, or beguiled the way with songs. Our own driver was not behind the rest in swearing and noise; his horses, however, behaved famously, but were severely tasked ere we gained the Hermitage, though we frequently descended and walked to relieve them.

On reaching the Hermitage, we found



the level space about the building covered with carriages, and crowded like a fair; vendors of fruits and liquors, in every variety, crying their wares, while boys offering stout walking-sticks, and guides their services, pestered with their importunities.

Leaving the Hermitage, we proceeded on foot with the throng, and guided by the glare of the volcanic fires, combined with the light of the moon which had now risen, we made our way over the rugged space that intervened, and reached the first grand point of attraction upon the borders of the fiery stream. Hundreds of spectators were collected at this spot, and truly the scene that presented itself was such as can never be forgotten. The river of glowing lava, after flowing across the plain of the Atrio del Cavallo, was here precipitated over a ledge of rock deep into a narrow ravine in the mountain's side, forming a stupendous cataract of fire. Occasionally the stream became obstructed at the summit of the fall, by rocks and masses of hardened

scoria borne down by the current then gaining force by accumulation, it would burst these temporary bounds, and the dark obstructing masses, mingled with the glowing flood, would again go crashing and thundering down the steep.

It was a glorious sight, but more wonders awaited us beyond ; quitting, therefore, the crowd at this point, we joined the more adventurous spirits, and proceeded onward in the direction of the spot where the mountain had opened to belch forth its fires, and which was indicated by occasional explosions and flights of red-hot stones shot high into the air.

After a fatiguing scramble and much opposition on the part of our guide, who—lazy rascal—had satisfied his own curiosity, and wanted, I believe, to get home to bed, we succeeded in reaching within a stone's-throw of the upper orifice from which the most violent explosions proceeded, though from another lower down flowed the most copious stream of lava ; altogether we

could perceive three orifices, but all considerably below the summit of the cone.

The view from the point we had now gained was so magnificent as to defy all description. The various streams of lava vomited forth at a white heat, and pouring down the mountain side with the impetuosity of torrents, were checked and divided by islands and promontories, whose jetty blackness was conspicuous amid the flood of light with which they were surrounded

Reaching the small ashy plain, of which I have so frequently made mention, these torrents uniting into one great stream, rolled on between well-defined banks, formed by the rapid cooling and solidification of its edges, with the majestic flow of a broad river, bearing upon its glowing surface dark floating masses and rafts of scoria, and traversing the entire extent of the plain, to be precipitated over the cataract lately described. So sublime a spectacle it assuredly falls to the lot of few to

witness; and we thank the good fortune that brought us to Naples at so auspicious a moment.

We remained till near midnight, and then reluctantly turned our backs upon this wondrous scene.

On regaining the Hermitage we found the crowd still increasing. The King had just arrived, accompanied by several members of the Royal Family. The carriages were drawn by long teams of artillery mules; artillerymen and dragoons were dashing about through the crowd, for whose lives or limbs they seemed to have little regard, and great was the fuss and excitement.

I obtained a good view of the portly King Bomba, and found him to be quite as ill-looking as the statues, which everywhere adorn his cities, represent him.

Vehicles by this time blocked up the way to such an extent, that it was with much delay and difficulty we got ours extricated and clear of the crowd; yet, as

we descended, we still met more carriages toiling up. It was past two o'clock when we reached Naples, and gained our welcome beds.

Friday, 4th. Yesterday was half spent before I opened my eyes, and I was glad to remain quiet during the afternoon. This morning, in company with my new comrade, I paid a farewell visit to the great museum; and we afterwards drove out towards San Georgio to meet the lava stream, which it was reported had reached the plain, and was devastating a village. Arrived at the spot, we found that report had greatly exaggerated; the lava was still confined within the high banks of the ravine, into which it had so fortunately flowed; but having advanced fully four miles from its source, it was now about to debouch upon some fine vineyards and gardens, and was threatening a small village that lay right in its course at no great distance.

Crowds of people from the neighbouring

villages, principally women and children, were assembled, watching the progress of the enemy, which, however, was so slow, that numerous vendors of oranges and iced water had established their stalls but fifty or sixty yards before the advancing mass. Parties of men were employed in the neighbourhood of the lava, cutting and carrying away every tree and stick that could be of value; and a little further on we saw a poor woman sitting upon the ground in the little garden-plot, her only property, and bitterly weeping at the prospect of coming ruin. Slow as is the progress of the lava, those fine apricot and almond trees, and that little spot of earth—to her more dear than all the wide world besides—must be overwhelmed and destroyed before to-morrow's sun goes down. Poor woman, how strange to her must sound the laughter and mirth of the neighbouring crowd of noisy spectators!

At this distance from its source the lava in no way resembled a stream, but had

rather the appearance of a large dyke, or ridge of dark rough stones and cinders, almost imperceptibly borne forward by the advancing semi-fluid mass underneath, and presenting a front of ten or twelve feet in height. As we were leaving the spot, we met a party of priests, bearing a crucifix, and advancing in solemn mockery to stay the progress of the enemy.

Saturday, 5th. This morning a vetturino, who has brought travellers from Rome, came to offer his services; and as I have now been near three weeks here, and have disposed of all the principal sights, I resolved to avail myself of this favourable opportunity to proceed, and at once concluded a contract, engaging to pay six pounds for the whole carriage, with bed and board, throughout the journey to Rome. The diligence would be cheaper, and more expeditious; but travelling by night I should miss much interesting scenery. Mr. L—— had intended to go by diligence, but willingly avails himself of my sugges-

tion, that he shall take a seat with me, and pay only the diligence fare.

Who can sojourn in Naples, and not feel regret when the moment arrives for taking leave of this most gay, dissolute, and noisy, but pleasant of cities, where the general object seems to be to "drive dull care away," and to get through this 'mortal existence with the least possible amount of toil and trouble?

From early morning till night, and almost from night till morning, noise, din, and clamour indescribable, fill the streets, while the most hopeless disregard of order everywhere reigns triumphant. Chestnut roasters and sausage fryers set up their stoves in the middle of the pavement, and shout their wares with throats of brass. The gaily-painted and decorated stalls of the lemonade and iced-water sellers, no less noisy, obstruct the roadway, without further opposition than the half-joking oaths and remonstrances of cabmen and drivers. Carts and vehicles, generally of a flaming



red colour, with horses decked with ribbons and gay plumes of scarlet feathers, rattle over the stones, numerous bells attached to the harness adding their jinglings to the loud clatter of the horses' hoofs upon the smooth lava pavements. All who speak shout at the top of their voices; while, as if to promote the general hubbub, the numerous vetturini, or cabmen, who throng the streets and squares, whether to urge their horses when they are in motion, or to attract the notice of pedestrians when they are standing still, maintain an incessant cracking with their long noisy whips, and often nearly drive over you while clamorously pressing their services.

Let it not, however, be supposed that all the sounds which produce such an aggregate of noise are of so disagreeable a nature. At early morn you are perhaps awakened by the harmonious strains of a fine military band passing to parade, or performing in honour of some festa or saint's day. When the bright sun has risen higher, a couple of

singers with guitar and violin beneath your window, will raise their melody above the surrounding din; before the next house Punch has taken his stand, while farther on a group of Calabrians in their wild, picturesque costume, are dancing to the sound of their rude bagpipes, formed of the entire skin of a dog or lamb. In short, Naples, with all its turmoil, and all its dust to boot, is a most delightful city for a pleasure seeker. Surely, no spot on earth commands so many enchanting scenes and objects of interest within its neighbourhood; and I packed up and prepared to depart with feelings of reluctance and regret.

## CHAPTER XIX.

A Stroll through Capua—Sant' Agata—A Frenchman's Astonishment—Mola—The Villa Cicerone—Robber Towns of Itri and Fondi—Terracina—Pontine Marshes—The Volscian Mountains—A Thunder Storm in the Marshes—Forest of Cisterna—Veletri—Albano—Valley of the Tiber—First Sight of the Eternal City—Entry into Rome—Coliseum—The Dying Gladiator—Fountain and Grove of Egeria—The Appian Way—Tombs of the Nobles of Ancient Rome—Rome, a Tomb of the Living.

SUNDAY, 6th. The vetturino with his vehicle was early at the door, and by seven o'clock I had packed up, breakfasted, and taken my seat, but proceeding to the Hôtel de Russie to pick up my friend, I found him in bed, and fast asleep; at eight o'clock, however, we got fairly off. After clearing the city, our road lay before us straight as an arrow for miles across the level Campania, and was bordered by interminable lines of poplars and elms, whose shade we found very agreeable. The rich plain is

extensively planted with grape-vines, trained high upon pollard elm-trees, and extending in a maze of beautiful festoons from tree to tree. Wheat and other crops are cultivated beneath, but they appear to suffer from the shade, and the wine produced from the vines is, as might be anticipated, of a very thin and inferior quality.

By noon we reached Capua, beautifully situated at the foot of the hills, and almost surrounded by a bend of the river Volturno, whose rapid stream washes the city walls.

While the horses fed, we spent an hour most agreeably, strolling about the city and ramparts, the view from which, looking up the valley of the river towards the Apennines, is enchanting beyond description.

At two o'clock we resumed our journey, and passing over a most richly cultivated and beautiful undulating country that borders the great Campanian plain, we, after four hours' travel, reached the little town of Sant' Agata, where we pulled up for the

night, at a small and rather unpromising albergo of the same name.

An old Frenchman with his wife, who arrived shortly after us, were consigned to the same common sitting-room, and I shall never forget the astonishment which the old gentleman, who understood a little Italian, manifested, on hearing me order breakfast and a beef-steak for five o'clock to-morrow morning.

"Monsieur!" he exclaimed, coming up to me, "est ce que vous avez commandé un bifteck pour cinq heures du matin?"

I replied in the affirmative, and explained that I was English.

"Ah, mon Dieu!" he continued, "un bifteck a cinq heures du matin—mon Dieu, mon Dieu!"

So astounding did this carnivorous inclination of mine seem to appear to our friend's Gallic prejudices, that during the rest of the evening he could not subdue his astonishment, but continued occasionally to

mutter, " Ah, mon Dieu ! ah, mon Dieu ! un bifteck a cinq heures du matin !"

Monday, 7th. We rose at dawn, and after disposing of our *bifteck*, got off soon after six—the morning clear, balmy, and delicious, disposing us to enjoy to the utmost the beautiful and varied scenery.

After passing the Garigliano by a fine suspension bridge, which contrasts strangely with the ancient ruins of Minturnæ close by, at the end of four hours we reached Mola, and stopped to bait at the Albergo Villa Cicerone, said to occupy the site of a favourite villa of Cicero; the garden before the house is quite undermined with ancient vaults and substructions, and masses of Roman brickwork appear above the surface.

The situation of the Villa Cicerone upon an eminence overlooking the bay of Gaëta, is beautiful beyond description. On every side the scene is enchanting: mountains, and rocks, gardens and orange groves, cities and towers, with a sea embellished

with islands, and studded with sails. It is, rarely, indeed, that such various features of beauty are collected in one view.

Leaving Mola, the road turns from the sea among the hills, and the scenery becomes wild and savage.

During the afternoon, we passed the robber towns of Itri and Fondi; the former is wildly situated upon a lofty, isolated hill, and its equally wild looking population might, if appearances go for aught, still furnish worthy successors to Sciarra and Fra Diavolo.

The people hereabouts differ much in personal appearance from those further south, having light, and even red hair, instead of the dark eyes and jetty locks of the Neapolitans: hazel eyes, and tresses of brown or chesnut hue, are here most common. Near Itri, we observed by the wayside some girls whose beauty was remarkable.

Towards evening the appearance of uniformed officials, and sundry demands for

“favóre” and fees, told us that we were passing the frontier of the Papal States. Traversing a narrow pass, confined between a rocky height and a broad marsh—and where the allusions of our driver Stefanini to the robber predilections of the people of the neighbourhood, and the vigilant glances that he cast towards every rock and thicket, showed in what direction his thoughts were tending—we soon after passed beneath a tremendous cliff, and entering Terracina, drew up before the Albergo della Posta, near the sea beach.

Our luggage was detained at the dogana for examination, and by the time this ceremony was concluded, a heavy thunder shower coming on, we were prevented from getting out to see anything of the town, and our only resource after supper was to go early to bed.

Tuesday, 8th. The sun rose brightly this morning, and after the showers of last night all nature looked fresh and joyous; dew-drops sparkled on the leaves, and light



mists floated about the hill-tops; the roads, too, are now free from dust, which has lately been rather troublesome.

Leaving Terracina at six o'clock, we at once entered upon the famous Pontine Marshes. The fine road is bordered on either side by beautiful elms, which meeting overhead, afford a most welcome shade, and so straight and level is the line of road, that the view extends without interruption for miles beneath the leafy arches of this magnificent avenue.

The marshes by no means realized my anticipations; in place of the putrid stagnant waters, and abundant vegetable decay that the fame of their deadly malaria would lead one to look for, we saw only wide savannahs covered with cattle, and bright with buttercups and wild flowers; some beds of reeds, and strips and patches of wood and thicket, dividing and intersecting the pastures, and numerous canals of clear, and generally running water. These are the features of the Pontine Marshes,

which, with the fine chain of the Volscian mountains on our right, formed, we thought, altogether a most pleasing landscape, and agreeable contrast to the rich cultivated scenery of previous days.

After leaving Foro Appio, a solitary post station standing in the midst of the plain, and where we stopped for a short time to bait, we were overtaken by a violent thunder-storm; the thunder crashed overhead, and the forked lightning darted about in unpleasant propinquity, while hail and rain descended in torrents. Poor Stefanini in great alarm devoutly crossed himself as every fresh thunder peal shook the air.

I was remarking to my companion that the tall posts and wires of the electric telegraph overhead effectually shielded us from danger, when, with a crash that completely electrified our affrighted driver, a stream of lightning descended a short distance in advance of us, and striking one of the telegraph posts, flashed and played along the wires with beautiful effect.

Soon after we came to one of the solitary rest-houses that are placed at intervals along the road over the marshes, and Stefanini immediately detaching his horses, retreated with them to its friendly shelter, and there remained till the storm had passed.

Clearing the marshes, we soon after passed through a portion of the fine forest of Cisterna; and early in the evening reaching Veletri, perched upon a high ridge, and commanding an extensive view across the plain as far as Terracina, we pulled up for the night.

Wednesday, 9th. Leaving Veletri, the road constantly ascending for ten miles winds through fine vineyards and plantations of olives to Albano, near which it crosses a deep ravine by a magnificent stone bridge lately completed, and formed in three tiers of lofty arches, altogether one hundred and seventy feet in height.

Soon after passing Albano, from the summit of the long slope by which the

road descends to the broad valley of the Tiber, we gained our first sight of the Eternal City, the towering cupola of St. Peter's already conspicuous, although yet fifteen or sixteen miles distant. The approach to Rome on this side is very striking; numerous ruins of tombs, villas, and temples, cover the silent waste, and giant aqueducts span the plain with their lofty arches, stretching away towards the distant mountains.

Early in the afternoon we entered Rome by the Gate of St. Giovanni, and after a very trifling delay, and easy examination of our baggage at the dogana, we proceeded, at the recommendation of Stefanini, to the Hôtel della Minerva, in the Piazza of the same name.

Thursday, 10th. This morning we engaged a cicerone, and went systematically about sight-seeing, proposing to take the different quarters of the city in regular succession; but my companion, wishing to get through all in one week, so hurried me

from place to place, that of the multitude of objects visited I scarce retain a clear recollection of any, and I am determined to go alone, and proceed more leisurely for the future.

The Coliseum is grand, far surpassing all ideas of it gained from descriptions or engravings. The beautiful Column of Trajan, and Constantine's Triumphal Arch, also fill one with admiration; but the Dying Gladiator in the galleries of the Capitol is sublime; no work of art I have hitherto seen has produced such thrilling sensations of admiration and pleasure, though not unmixed with pain, as did this wonderful statue. The Hercules, and the Toro Farnese, at Naples, are magnificent; and many of the antique marbles and bronzes that crowd the galleries of the Museum, astonish with their symmetry and life-like aspect. But there is a pathos in the attitude, and a touching expression in the manly features of the Dying Gladiator, that at once arrested me, filling my mind

with overpowering sensations of mingled pleasure and melancholy, as I lingered, spell-bound, gazing upon this wonderful triumph of art, till the repeated remonstrances of my impatient friend drew me reluctantly away.

Friday, 11th. The weather was delicious to-day; and we found agreeable relief from the continual survey of ruined monuments—the melancholy records of departed greatness—in a visit to the Fountain and Grove of Egeria, in the pretty, secluded, green valley of Caffarelli, about a mile from the city. Time, who has overthrown the proudest monuments reared by the mighty successors of the wise king to whom the fountain owes its classic fame, has here wrought so little change, that the crystal stream still gushes from the rock, and the sequestered shady pool would yet be an appropriate hiding-place for a water-nymph.

We afterwards drove out along the Appian Way, the pavement of which, still looking

sound and perfect as when the huge blocks of which it is composed were first laid down, has been cleared of the superincumbent earth and rubbish for some miles. Numerous tower-like structures, still grand in their decay—the tombs of the rich and noble of ancient Rome—rear their massive forms along the wayside. Shattered, defaced, and capped with shrubs and wild flowers, but still powerfully battling against time, many of these monuments of wealth and vanity appear as though they may yet endure a thousand years.

Conspicuous among them, and interesting alike for its wonderful state of preservation and for the motive that prompted its construction—a husband's sorrow for a departed wife—is the immense circular tomb of Cæcilia Metella, the wife of Crassus. After the lapse of nineteen centuries, the fine blocks of travertine with which this massy structure is cased still retain all the original sharpness of their edges and angles, and in

many parts even the marks of the chisel are yet distinctly visible.

The entire surface of the ground along the sides of the Appian for some miles from the walls of the city, is literally composed of marble fragments of statues, reliefs, and ornamental sculptures. But where, indeed, in or about Rome, is it possible to turn without meeting evidences of former splendours, and of ruthless, unsparing destruction, alike exciting to the imagination and depressing to the spirits. Indeed, these influences, together with the general tone of discontent and depression occasioned by the well-remembered events of 1849, by the hated French occupation, and by the continual dread of espionage and arbitrary authority under which the citizens appear to live—discussing all public or political matters *sotto voce*, or declining to express opinions at all—render Rome, to my ideas, so *triste* and gloomy—a perfect tomb of the living—that I feel no disposition to prolong my sojourn beyond



the period necessary for viewing its numerous wonders; and as a daily record of my progress in this pursuit would only involve a description of objects with which all who have not seen with their own eyes are already as familiar as it is possible to become through the medium of written descriptions, I shall for the present close my Diary, and resume when I shall be about to continue my wanderings.

## CHAPTER XX.

Sight-seeing at Rome—The Apollo-Belvedere a Disappointment—Palace of the Quirinal—Castel Gandolfo—Site of Tusculum—Excursion to Tivoli—The Temple of the Sybil—Isola Farnese—An Etruscan Tomb and its Contents—Roman Sheep and Shearing—Sculptors' Studios—Ascent of St. Peter's—View from the Upper Gallery—Last Evening in Melancholy Rome.

SATURDAY, 19th. Since the 11th we have not had an idle moment; rising early, and remaining abroad all day, we have devoted our time entirely to sight-seeing expeditions, and yet we have scarcely found the time sufficient for visiting all the numberless objects of interest with which Rome so much abounds. We have seen ruined forums, arches, temples, and aqueducts—we have stood beneath the towering cupola of St. Peter's, and of its immortal prototype, the sublime Pantheon—we have descended into catacombs, sepulchres, and

columbaria, climbed the mountain ruins of the stupendous baths of Caracalla, and wandered perplexed over the mighty wilderness of brickwork marking the site of the palace of the Cæsars. We have besides spent many delightful hours among the halls of statuary and Etruscan antiquities; and among the picture galleries, with their more modern treasures, of the interminable Vatican; as well as among those of several private palazzi — the Borghese, the Barberini, and the Ros-pigliosi: in the latter we saw the celebrated fresco, the Aurora of Guido.

With the Apollo Belvedere I must confess myself a little disappointed. To me the marble seems to be deficient in that soft, flesh-like, living appearance which, in the Dying Gladiator, and in the Venus of the Capitol, the art of the sculptor has succeeded in producing to such a remarkable degree.

One day we made a run through the halls and chambers of the Pope's palace of

the Quirinal; here the most ostentatious austerity of appearance is studiously preserved throughout in the furniture and arrangements; the high-backed, wooden chairs are suggestive of anything but repose or comfort, and the polished oaken floors look cold and cheerless. In the dining-room a very diminutive table and a single chair would imply most abstemious and unconvivial repasts; but may not the smallest board be made to bear the most sumptuous feast in luxurious detail? We were shown the chamber in which the Pope sits to receive such of the fair sex as are desirous to bring their pious lips in contact with his holiness's toe; the apartment is constructed chiefly of glass, like a conservatory, and stands detached in the gardens of the palace, seeming to imply doubts of the holy father's complete exaltation above earthly passions and desires, or suspicion of the purely devotional feelings and intentions of his fair visitors.

The Pope has continued absent from

Rome during the Holy Week, and on Thursday, instead of coming to the city to bless his people as usual, from the balcony of St. Peter's, he, much to the dissatisfaction of the citizens, went through the ceremony at Castel Gandolfo, a small town near Albano, about fourteen miles distant. Wishing to get a sight of his holiness, we engaged a fiacre, and drove out to the scene of action; but, to our mortification, were a few minutes too late; the benediction had been bestowed upon the expectant crowd a quarter of an hour before the appointed time of mid-day, and his holiness had just retired from his balcony as we reached the spot.

We found, however, ample compensation for our disappointment in the pleasures of our afternoon's excursion. Turning from Castel Gandolfo, along the picturesque, shady road to Frascati, we there quitted our vehicle, and ascended to the site of Tusculum, whose ruins occupy a beautiful situation upon a mountain-top, com-

manding a most extensive and enchanting view of Rome, the Campagna, and the surrounding hills, dotted with villages and towns.

Returning to Frascati, with appetites sharpened by the clear mountain air, we dined sumptuously upon roast mutton and quails, with green peas, washed down by a bottle of the much-esteemed wine of the district—which we thought, however, hardly deserved its fame—and reached the Hôtel della Minerva late in the evening, highly pleased with our day's ramble.

Last Tuesday we made an excursion to Tivoli, whose picturesque temple of the Sybil and fine romantic falls we saw, however, to great disadvantage under a dark, clouded sky; and heavy rain coming on before noon, and relentlessly continuing till night, compelled us to abandon our intention to visit the neighbouring ruins of the famous Villa of Hadrian. We were not, however, ill-pleased with our trip, though the romantic scenery about Tivoli

would have been doubly enchanting under a bright sun.

My companion of the last three weeks departed this morning for Civita Vecchia, *en route* to Leghorn and Florence.

Sunday, 20th. To-day, for the first time since quitting Malta, I got upon a horse, and made a most interesting excursion to Isola Farnese, the site of ancient Veii, twelve miles from Rome, on the Florence road. My object was to visit an Etruscan tomb that was opened so lately as 1843, and which, having been preserved intact with all it contained when discovered, is possessed of peculiar interest. A strong door was fitted to the entrance of the tomb at the time it was opened, and thus the contents have been protected from disturbance. Admittance is readily obtained on payment of a small fee.

The sepulchre consists of two small chambers hewn in the volcanic rock; the walls are covered with delineations of men, dogs, horses, and other animals, strangely

grotesque, and disproportionate in form, and depicted in the most inappropriate colours; in the inner chamber a number of square cinerary urns, or boxes, rest upon a sort of ledge or shelf; some other earthen jars, of large dimensions, stand upon the floor at each side; but the most interesting relics are the helmet and arms of the warrior, whose skeleton was found entire lying upon a stone platform, projecting from the wall, at the right hand of the entrance, but which crumbled to dust as soon as the air was admitted; a second skeleton, without armour, and supposed to be that of a woman, lay upon a similar bier, at the opposite side.

The helmet and breastplate are of bronze, and the former bears evidence of the fatal stroke that brought its wearer to the tomb. A spear has entered at one side, dividing and tearing the tough metal; and passing clear through the head, a little behind the temples, the point has slightly



perforated the helmet on the opposite side. A vigorous arm must have launched this fatal spear.

During the day I observed several flocks of sheep, some of them newly shorn, which I almost instinctively went to examine. From the shepherds I learned that the best shearers clip from fifty to sixty sheep per diem, and that their remuneration is no more than two pauls, or about tenpence, with three meals daily. The shearing is not very skilfully or neatly performed, though it is such as we should not be dissatisfied with in Australia.

The Roman cattle are by no means bad-looking animals; they are broad shaped, large, and uniformly of a peculiar gray colour.

The day, though bright and sunny, was cool and extremely agreeable; but such has been the effect of long abstinence from horse exercise, that I, who for the better part of my life have almost lived in the saddle, returned to Rome this evening very

thoroughly tired with my twenty-four miles canter.

Monday, 21st. Being now without a companion, I have determined to proceed to Florence by the diligence, instead of employing a vetturino, and have taken a place for Wednesday next.

I set off this morning from the hotel, in company with two young Frenchmen, intending to mount the dome of St. Peter's; but found, when it was too late to rectify the omission to-day, that the written order of some ecclesiastical dignitary is requisite; however, we have got all in train for to-morrow.

This afternoon I visited several studios of the sculptors, who are most obliging in their attention and civility to strangers. I was much struck with the beauty of a statue of Eve with the apple, lately completed in the studio of Signore Benzoni.

Tuesday, 22nd. After an early breakfast we started for St. Peter's, wishing to enjoy the view from the cupola with the

advantage of the clear morning air. Crossing the muddy Tiber, by the Ponte S. Angelo, we soon reached our goal. The morning was bright and in every way favourable.

The first part of the ascent is by a spiral stair or rather incline, so easy that horses might be ridden up its broad windings without difficulty; this conducts to the roof of the main body of the Cathedral, and it is here that one is most impressed with the stupendous proportions and extent of the structure. The roof is quite a miniature town in itself, where you may wander through streets and alleys, among parapets, lanterns, and cupolas, some of which are large enough to cover an ordinary church; while from the midst of all the great dome rises still towering to the skies, and appearing even taller and more grand in its proportions than it did from the piazza below.

Leaving the roof, a long series of staircases, winding between the double walls of

the cupola, conduct to its summit and open upon its internal galleries. Looking from these the immense height can be appreciated. People moving about on the pavement look no larger than rabbits, and the mosaics of the dome are now found to be as coarse and rough in their execution as from below they appeared minute and delicate.

Above the cupola the endless ascent is continued by means of a narrow spiral staircase, and finally by an iron ladder into the ball, which forms in itself a tolerably spacious chamber, large enough to contain a dozen persons.

The view from the upper gallery below the ball is one of the most magnificent that can be imagined; the city is spread out below, like a map, and the prospect extends over the whole of the Campagna, from the picturesque Apennines to the blue waters of the Mediterranean.

I remained long enjoying this entrancing

scene, and afterwards set about my packing and preparations for departure, without one feeling of regret that this is to be my last evening in melancholy Rome.

## CHAPTER XXI.

Departure from Rome—A Journey in a Diligence—Unprotected Females—Ascent of Monte Cimino—Lago di Vico and its Oak Forest—Viterbo—Deserted Shores of Lago di Bolsena—Frontiers of Tuscany—Siena—Arrival in Florence—Attractions of the City—The Venus di Medicis another Disappointment—Ducal Manufactory of Mosaics—Unrivalled Gardens and Promenades—Tower of Galileo—Soft Smiling Beauty of the Landscape—Uncomfortable Rumours of Cholera.

WEDNESDAY, 23rd. The diligence got off punctually at six o'clock, and I found myself shut up in the interior with three very plain women and a lap-dog—a woeful position for a bachelor of retiring habits—and with no hope of release for thirty hours certain, at the least. It was not to be expected that such a party of “unprotected females” could get away without *some* troubles, and we had, accordingly, not long started when it was discovered that something had been left behind. The coach

was now stopped, the ladies clamoured, all talking together, and the guard remonstrated, till the missing treasure—a book or some such trifle—at length coming to light, the excitement subsided.

We now proceeded without further adventure, and, leaving the city by the Porta del Popolo, followed for ten miles the road that I traversed on Sunday; beyond this, the country became more wild and desolate, covered with fern and yellow broom, and towards mid-day, rain beginning to fall heavily added to the gloomy aspect of the landscape.

At about forty miles from Rome commences the ascent of Monte Cimino, the northern boundary of the valley of the Tiber, and here additional horses were attached; on the more precipitous portions of the ascent, we had no less than eight before us.

The solitary little Lago di Vico round which the road winds in ascending, and whose lofty shores are clothed with a fine

oak forest, makes a beautiful appearance, and in clear weather the extensive prospect commanded from Monte Cimino must be extremely fine.

Gaining the summit of the pass, we rapidly descended to the Viterbo, where at two o'clock, after eight hours' travel, we were at length allowed a short time to refresh. Here we met with the famous *vino d'este*, the sweet wine of Montefiascone, with the boasted excellences of which we were, however, disappointed.

During the afternoon, the country still presented the same uninteresting features, till towards evening, when we approached the Lago di Bolsena, a beautiful sheet of water, twenty-six miles in circumference, and surrounded, like the Lago di Vico, by finely wooded heights. Except the picturesque little town of Bolsena occupying an eminence by the margin of the lake, few signs of habitation are visible upon its deserted shores; a few small fishing-boats were peacefully floating upon the glassy waters,



and the peculiarly lonely and quiet beauty of the scene was rendered more perfect by a gleam of pale, silvery light, shot by the declining sun across the placid surface of the lake, as his last rays struggled for a moment through the heavy clouds that covered the western sky.

Evening now soon closed in, but cramped and confined, without space to stretch my aching joints, sleep was courted in vain, and the hours dragged slowly on.

Thursday, 24th. Soon after we passed Radicofani, the frontier town of Tuscany, day began to break, and disclosed a landscape even more waste and uncultivated than that of yesterday.

At eleven o'clock we reached Siena, and drove into the court-yard of the dogana, when I joyfully quitted my narrow prison, more thoroughly cramped, tired, and jaded than I had ever in my life before felt, after a journey of one hundred and sixty miles. Our baggage was again very gently treated, and we soon repaired to the clean little inn

of the Arme d'Inghilterra, where we found a good breakfast, moderate charges, and civil attendants.

The railway train hence to Florence not leaving before five o'clock in the evening, I employed the interval in a ramble through the town, which is prettily situated among the hills, and in visits to the interesting old cathedral, the house of St. Catherine, the public gardens, and other principal objects.

At five we left Siena, and passing through a beautiful and highly cultivated country, reached the Florence station after eight; the distance is not more than fifty miles, but numerous stations occur along the line to impede the progress of the train. Another half hour was consumed in disposing of passport formalities, before we could enter the gates of Florence, and it was past nine o'clock when I at length reached the New York Hotel, upon the lung' Arno, heartily fagged, tired, and sleepy,

when dining immediately, I went at once to bed.

Friday, 25th. I was glad to be quiet to-day, and attempted nothing beyond a walk to the post-office, where, as I had hoped, I at length found letters giving me intelligence of the safe arrival in England of the friends from whom I parted at Malta.

Tuesday, June 19th. The last three weeks have been almost exclusively devoted to the galleries and museums of the Uffizi and Palazzo Pitti, the Belle Arti, the studios of the artists, and many private galleries of pictures and works of art. A daily record of my occupations, therefore, could have been little better than a descriptive catalogue of the numberless treasures which these galleries contain; I have consequently thought it best to make this long gap in my Diary, and on resuming, to take merely a brief retrospect of the period that has elapsed since my last entry in its pages.

Florence is by far the most delightful place of sojourn I have yet visited, uproarious Naples even not excepted; the situation, the climate, the people, all are charming, while the galleries, museums, and palaces, the music and theatres, the studios of the living artists, and the very *ateliers* of the workers in marble and alabaster, afford inexhaustible sources of amusement and pleasure.

To name even the valuable pictures and marbles of the various galleries would fill a volume, and I should only weary by a disquisition upon their various beauties and perfections, or an attempt to describe the pleasure derived from an acquaintance with them. I shall only mention, *en passant*, that the Venus di Medici somewhat disappointed my perhaps too extravagantly raised expectations; while the Arrotino, a stooping figure grinding a knife, and which is placed near the Venus, excited unmingled feelings of admiration.

The Grand Ducal manufactory of the

costly mosaics for which Florence is so famous, afforded me a very interesting morning's occupation. None but the hardest stones are used in this expensive manufacture, and the labour of grinding into shape, and fitting the different parts of the work, is almost incredible; months, and even years, are consumed in constructing a single table. I was shown some of moderate dimensions recently completed, and valued at thirteen and fourteen hundred scudi, or about £300. A large and very elaborately inlaid table completed a few years ago at this establishment, and now seen at the Pitti, cost, it is told, no less than £40,000 sterling; while another, which is shown at the Uffizi, and is a work of the seventeenth century, is said to have occupied twenty-two workmen for twenty-five years.

Florence is unrivalled in its gardens and promenades. The Cascine comprises a large extent of meadows and shady woods lying along the bank of the Arno adjacent to the city, and laid out in drives and pretty se-

questred walks; here in the evenings the citizens are to be seen in great numbers enjoying the cool shade, and the magnificent scenery that is commanded from every part of the grounds. A good military band attracts additional crowds to the Cascine every Sunday evening.

The Boboli gardens attached to the palace of the Grand Duke are also open to the public on Sundays and Thursdays; I saw these to the greatest advantage under a hot sun, when the delightful shade of their embowered walks and long avenues, and the fresh breezes that their elevated situation commands, could be fully appreciated. The gardens are adorned with numerous statues, and fountains filled with gold and silver fish, the groves and thickets resound with the songs of wild birds, and from the fine terraces the most magnificent views are obtained of the city and surrounding hills.

From these enchanting gardens we proceeded to the tower of Galileo, some

distance beyond, and situated upon a considerable height. From this point the city is viewed spread out in the foreground, and the prospect embraces the whole of the fine valley or basin in which Florence lies.

The country around "Firenza la Bella," though mountainous, has nothing of the grand or sublime, but for soft smiling beauty, the landscape, as viewed from that little rude observatory of the immortal astronomer, seemed to surpass all that I had ever seen or even dreamt of; some distant snow-clad peaks of the Apennines in the background, gave a finish to the picture, but were too remote to disturb the prevailing air of tranquil sunny repose.

Of those who sat at the table d'hôte of the Hôtel de New York, on my first coming to Florence, I alone now remain—all have one by one dropped off, and departed in different directions; for myself, I yet feel disposed to linger, and intend to make some excursions into the surrounding country, beginning to-morrow with Lucca.

The guests at the table d'hôte for the last few days have been principally French and Germans, whose performances are somewhat surprising, particularly those of the ladies. Knives are made to do duty as forks in the most alarming fashion, plates are lifted to get at the last drop of gravy; but most surprising of all, is the display of long wooden skewers ycleped toothpicks, which at each pause in the trencher-work are brought into play with an air of unhesitating assurance that is edifying to behold. A long row of fair ones engaged at once in animated conversation and active employment of these formidable-looking instruments, makes a very remarkable appearance.

For a day or two past there have been prevalent some uncomfortable rumours of cholera; but the Florentines generally refuse belief, and are disposed to attribute the reports to the machinations of the local doctors, who are accused of being great



sinner in this way. Report even goes so far as to charge some individuals of their profession with having on a former occasion administered poison to their poorer patients, with a view to create an impression that cholera existed in the city. This seems almost beyond belief; but we are assured that so little doubt was entertained of the fact, that the Government has, since the occasion referred to, discontinued the practice formerly in use, of retaining, or taking into its pay for the service of the poor, a certain number of the medical profession of the city whenever rumours of cholera became prevalent.

To-day rain is falling in abundance, which is an advantage, for the weather latterly has been sultry and oppressive, though, as far as I know, 86° of Fahrenheit has been the greatest degree of heat indicated by the thermometer, but the evenings and nights appear, when measured by an Australian standard, disproportionately warm.

## CHAPTER XXII.

The Sovereign City of Lucca—Bagnio alla Villa—Ducal Palace of Marlia—A Magnificent Prospect—Pisa and its Leaning Tower—Feeling of Insecurity in ascending the Tower—Return to Florence—Grand Festa of San Giovanni—An Italian Horserace—Military Overbearing and Tuscan Submission—Monastery of Vallombrosa—Valley of the Arno—Monks and their Wine—Mendicant Villagers.

WEDNESDAY, 20th. Accompanied by Antonio, my very useful and assiduous guide and valet, who I took into my service on first coming to the New York, I left Florence at half-past one o'clock by the Pistoja train, to proceed to Lucca; and passing through a lovely country, cultivated like a garden, we, at the end of about twenty miles, reached Pistoja. Here we were transferred to a sort of light omnibus, and conveyed over Monte Catino a few miles to Pescia, whence, after a delay of above an hour, which we agreeably consumed in the

discussion of a roasted chicken and *fixings*, we again proceeded by rail, and towards evening, in the midst of a rich and fertile plain, we came in sight of the grass-grown walls and shady ramparts of the once important and sovereign City of Lucca.

After reaching the hotel, rain, which had been threatening all the afternoon, began to fall, and kept us indoors. During the evening we secured the services of a *vetturino*, who, for three scudi and a *buonomano*, contracts to carry us to-morrow to the Baths and back again.

Thursday, 21st. We got off this morning at half-past five, and drawn by a stout pair of grays progressed at a famous pace; the air was sharp and exhilarating, and the morning, though not clear, looked promising.

The road ascending the course of the Serchio for some miles follows a high artificial bank that has been formed to confine the inundations of the stream. Approaching the hills the valley contracts, and the

scenery becomes varied and beautiful in the extreme; the lower hills and slopes are rich with vines and olives, and fine chestnut forests cover the mountain sides. Further on, the narrow ancient bridge of the Madalena makes a picturesque appearance, spanning the rapid stream with its tall irregular arches; and, as we continued to advance, every turn of the road brought fresh beauties into view, till, at fifteen miles from Lucca, we reached the romantic little village of Bagnio alla Villa, situated in the midst of the Baths. Here, at the clean little inn of the Pelicano, I was quickly served with a capital breakfast, fresh eggs, butter, and delicious trout newly taken from the dashing stream that bounds the little garden below the windows of the house.

Breakfast ended, I was provided with an active pony, and a not less active lad to serve as guide, and set out for a ramble among the hills. Shady pathways winding up the steeps conducted us by a succession of surprisingly easy ascents to the summit

of the lofty precipitous range that overhangs the village, and from the sides of which issue the various mineral and hot springs. The view from this eminence is of the most picturesque and romantic description; mountain succeeds mountain on every side, the prospect extending to the great chain of the Apennines. The otherwise sombre aspect of the chestnut forests which everywhere clothe the mountains is here and there relieved by bright patches of cultivation, and enlivened by the appearance of spires and villages peeping from the deep shade upon the hillsides, or crowning the most inaccessible looking steeps.

I would fain have passed the whole day among these beautiful shady mountains, but heavy clouds and rain approaching, I yielded to the suggestions of my guide, and descended to the Bagni Caldi, prettily situated upon the hillside, and at a considerable elevation above the valley. The Baths are lined with marble, and looked so bright, clean, and inviting, that had the

day been finer I should have been tempted to make a first trial of a bath heated in Nature's cauldron.

The rain continuing to fall steadily, and the weather giving no promise of amendment, we set out soon after two o'clock upon our return to Lucca; but before we had proceeded half the distance, the sun broke unexpectedly out again, and we took advantage of the fine evening to visit the ducal palace and beautiful grounds of Marlia, finely situated upon the lower slopes of the mountains, at a short distance from the road.

The prospect commanded from the windows and terraces of Marlia is so magnificent, as to stand pre-eminent even in this beautiful portion of Italy, and is such as no pen could adequately describe. In front the broad fertile plain of Lucca stretches away to the distant Pisan hills; more to the left the bright waters of Lake Bientina bound the landscape; to the right the bold heights are crowned with convents

and ruined castles; while immediately in the rear of the palace rises an amphitheatre of luxuriant but precipitous hills, embellished with villas and cottages buried among the richest vegetation. The gardens are adorned with fountains, statues, and cascades; and the lawns, shrubberies, and grounds, are laid out in English style.

Towards sunset we reached Lucca highly delighted with the day's excursion, spite of the unfavourable weather; and during the evening a harp and clarionet, "discoursing sweet music" in the square, beneath my window, still prolonged the enjoyments of this agreeable day.

Friday, 22nd. This morning I rose early, and began the day with a walk round the beautiful shady ramparts of Lucca. The rising sun was coming gloriously forth, his early beams rioting among the glittering dew-drops that loaded the luxuriant vegetation of the plain; while the hills unveiling seemed to part reluctantly with the masses of white vapour which, slowly rolling up

the mountain sides, retained a lingering hold upon their summits, before floating away to melt and disappear. It was a lovely morning, such as even southern summers can rarely boast, and I shall ever retain a most pleasing remembrance of the grove-covered ramparts and fine old city of "Lucca l'Industriosa."

About noon we departed by train for Pisa, bent on gratifying my long-cherished desire to behold its wondrous "leaning tower." The transit occupied only an hour, and as the train for Florence did not leave before half-past five, I found ample time to visit all that is worth seeing at Pisa. Besides the tower there are the Cathedral, the Baptistry, and the famous Campo Santo, interesting for its antique sarcophagi, and for its frescoes; but chiefly remarkable as containing a quantity of the veritable soil of the Holy Land, brought hither from Mount Calvary six centuries ago, and with which the entire space is covered.



The pendent appearance of the tower is truly wonderful, and quite exceeded my anticipations; but that the departure from the perpendicular is the effect of original design, and not of subsequent accident, to me appeared certain. A slight return towards the perpendicular, observable in the last two or three tiers or stories near the summit, proves that the tower did not assume its present attitude subsequently to its completion; while, on the other hand, it seems improbable that the architect would have proceeded with his work in the face of so extraordinary a subsidence of the foundations, had the original intention been to build the tower upright.

The ascent is very easily accomplished by a winding stair of more than three hundred steps, included within the thickness of the massive walls, and the view from the summit, which is near a hundred and eighty feet above the pavement, is very commanding, and includes Leghorn, its lighthouse and shipping, with a large ex-

tent of the surrounding plain, and the shores of the Mediterranean.

The stair communicates with each of the seven external galleries that encircle the tower. An irrepressible feeling of insecurity is experienced while perambulating the more elevated of these; the sloping pavement seems about to give way beneath your feet, and upon the lower side the leaning columns look as if a touch would cause them to fall, and bring all down together.

The general appearance of Pisa is handsome and imposing, more particularly near the fine street or terrace following the sweep of the right bank of the Arno, which is superior to any part of the lung'Arno at Florence.

Quitting Pisa by the evening train, I felt glad, at eight o'clock, to find myself once more in my comfortable room at the New York, which has become quite a home to me.

Saturday, 23rd. All Florence is occupied

to-day with preparations for the grand festa of San Giovanni. Lofty scaffoldings, loaded with fireworks, cover the bridge opposite the hotel, entirely closing the thoroughfare; tiers of seats are erected along the Corso, and in other parts of the city; and to share in the rejoicings numbers of the Contadine have flocked in from the surrounding villages; their broad flapping hats and sun-burnt faces imparting more picturesque variety to the unwonted crowds that fill the streets. As soon as night closed the diversions began with a very brilliant display of fireworks, among which numerous fire-balloons ascending high in the calm evening air, made a beautiful appearance.

Sunday, 24th. This morning the ceremonies opened with high mass in the Cathedral, strangely accompanied by frequent discharges of firearms, and a deafening roll of drums by a large body of troops drawn up in the piazza outside. The Grand Duke and Duchess were present during mass, an officer, with drawn sword, stand-

ing at each side of their canopied seat. The duke is a gentlemanly-looking old man, apparently rather below the middle stature, and his countenance wears a mild and rather prepossessing expression, which his silvery locks serve to increase; yet this is a man whom oaths do not bind when it suits his interest or his purpose to break them.

Mass was succeeded at noon by a grand state lottery! in the Piazza Gran Duca, where the wheel was turned and numbers were declared by officials in splendid uniforms, while a crash of music, by a military band, proclaimed the drawing of the prizes.

The evening concluded with a horse-race in the Italian mode, the racers carrying, in lieu of riders, a number of small balls attached to their sides and haunches, and armed with needlessly long and sharp steel points, which punished the poor brutes terribly. The racing takes place through one of the principal thoroughfares of the city, the pavement of which is covered

with sand for the occasion; seats are set up in every available space, multitudes cover the housetops, and fill the windows and balconies, and the duke comes in *grande tenue* to occupy a stand, gorgeously decorated and prepared for the event; lines of soldiers, with fixed bayonets, and dragons, with naked sabres, bully and force back the submissive crowd that lines the narrow course with living walls, which, yielding to the pressure of the swarms debouching from cross streets and alleys, sways to and fro, and, spite of the exertions and threats of the soldiers, occasionally all but blocks up the passage.

After all this wonderful preparation and expectancy, at sunset, the horses, each marked upon his sides with a large distinctive number in *white paint*, are let go. Plunging, kicking, and maddened by the tormenting balls, they dash wildly past, and, at the first turn of the narrow course, in a few moments, vanish from sight, and

thus ends all that can be seen of this uninteresting and stupid race.

Monday, 25th. Last night one of the racers fell, and was so much injured that it was found necessary to destroy him; and two more breaking through the crowd, bolted down cross streets, and were only captured when they had become exhausted.

This evening the survivors of yesterday ran again, and having on the last occasion witnessed the start, I went to-night to the other extremity of the course to see the animals come in. Nothing could be imagined more spiritless and stupid: No. 10 won in a canter by half a distance at the least; the rest, bleeding and exhausted, coming in at their leisure through the crowds that here covered the course, and merely opening a passage for the hapless brutes as they approached, closed in behind, and endeavoured by yells and gestures to urge them to a better pace.

After the race was won, and it might have been supposed that all pretext for

restraint and coercion had ended, the military still continuing to obstruct and interfere, with the customary overbearing insolence of these Florentine heroes, even Tuscan submission and patience could endure no longer. The crowd with a rush broke through the barrier, the soldiers were ordered to fix bayonets, officers with drawn swords and mighty words vapoured and threatened, and I expected a general row; but the mob having gained its point of passing the cordon of soldiers who surrounded the judge's stand, was satisfied with the victory, and began directly to disperse.

So far is this system of armed overbearing carried here, that not only the spectators of a race, but even the company that is drawn together by the musical performances in the Cascine, is subjected to a martial display of naked weapons; troopers pace through the walks and drives with drawn sabres, and the guards that surround the band, not only carry their bayonets

fixed, but swing their firelocks so carelessly about over their shoulders, as frequently to endanger the heads and faces of those who stand behind them. On one occasion a bayonet point came in this way so near my face, that I struck it up with my cane, to the manifest indignation of the bearer, who, I fancy, however, perceived that he had not a subject of the Grand Duke to deal with, for after looking very hard at me, he turned into his place again without speaking.

Tuesday, 26th. In company with a young Frenchman and his wife, who I meet at the table d'hôte, I made an excursion to the famous Monastery of Vallombrosa, high perched among the slopes of the Apennines, about eighteen miles from Florence. We started at six o'clock, proceeding by carriage fourteen miles to the foot of the mountains; the road for some distance ascends the picturesque valley of the Arno, which above Florence becomes a rapid torrent, but for the last four miles the path is very precipitous, winding along the sides of a



deep ravine, and ascending the mountains through rocks and chestnut forests, by numerous turnings.

The convent, which is approached through a grove of noble pines, stands upon a small cleared plateau, surrounded in the rear by an amphitheatre formed by the more lofty crest of the range. A clear streamlet descends from the rocks above, forming a beautiful cascade, and after supplying the fountains and reservoirs of the convent, plunges down, and is lost in the dark forest below.

The open space about the monastery is at this season covered with rich meadow grass, and from the shady walks that lead at different points into the pine forest, the views are extensive and fine, embracing the whole plain of the Arno to the sea. Florence, with its *duomo*, and the groves and meadows of the Cascine, are distinctly visible with the silver stream of the upper Arno winding through richly cultivated hills to the plain.

Within the buildings of the convent there is little of interest to be seen; the best pictures have long since been removed to the galleries at Florence, but relics there are in abundance for those who take an interest in such curiosities.

The dining-tables in the refectory, which the jolly monks had lately quitted, afforded, we thought, a sort of index to the individual dispositions, or at least the habits of the holy fraternity, in the condition of the wine flasks. Some were full to the neck, telling of ascetic self-denial; others there were whose contents had ebbed half way, and spoke of habits of regularity and precision; some retained but a glassfull of the ruby juice to save appearances, and told of greedy appetites, with timid or deceitful natures; while the flasks of a few more reckless, thirsty spirits, had been boldly drained to the last drop. Our conductor, one of the fraternity, observing our mirth, readily comprehended the joke, and laughingly pointed out the emptied flasks.

At the mid-day meal a bottle of wine—the daily allowance—is placed before each monk, and should this be then consumed a less generous beverage from the neighbouring stream must serve to wash down the supper. The holy men, we were told, complain of their straitened allowance, which has been restricted to a single flask in consequence of the late failures in the grape crops, and consequent increased price of wine.

For the accommodation of lady visitors, who are not allowed to enter the convent, a bed-chamber and sitting-room are provided in a detached building, and here we were regaled with wine, the produce of the vineyards belonging to the monastery, and with bread and omelets from its hospitable kitchens.

Descending on our return, we met frequent groups of old women and children near the little mountain villages that lie concealed in hollows and glens; all begged alms, and looked very lean, ragged, and

destitute; many offered baskets of small wild strawberries which they had been gathering upon the mountain. Far from participating in our admiration of the romantic scenery amid which they dwell, these poor people complained of the fate that had cast their lot among the mountains, and appeared to envy the dwellers in the plain. A few crazie were very thankfully received, and a paolo, which represents about fivepence halfpenny, would draw forth a torrent of thanks and wishes for one's eventual safe arrival in *paradiso*, through the intervention of the *Santa Vergine*.

The sun was sinking when we regained the village of Pelago and our carriage, and notwithstanding the very evident after-dinner condition of our driver, and the reckless pace at which he rattled down the hills, it was near nine o'clock when we re-entered the gates of Florence.

Wednesday, 27th. Resolved to yield no longer to the seductions of this agreeable

city, I have arranged to leave by train to-morrow morning for Leghorn, and proceed thence by the steam-packet that departs the same evening for Genoa. Here, and at Naples, I have consumed so much more time than I had intended, that I must not henceforward loiter by the way, nor tarry long in any of the countries I yet wish to visit, before passing over into my native land. Antonio, who, poor fellow, has a dying child to attend to, remains behind, but he has induced me to take a Venetian acquaintance of his as my servant, in which, upon second thoughts, I feel doubts of having done wisely, as I shall probably find Gregorio more an encumbrance than an advantage to me throughout my rambles; he neither speaks nor understands English, but professes a great desire to serve an English master.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

Departure from Florence—Unattractive Leghorn—Discomfort on the Passage to Genoa—Suspicious Reports of Cholera—Pleasures of Fumigation—Genoa—Festival of St. Peter—Beauty of the Women—House and Relics of Columbus—Tunnel through the Apennines—Plains of Piedmont and Lombardy—The Alps—Battle-field of Marengo—Alessandria—Novara—Rice Swamps—The Austrian Frontier—Austrian Illiberality and Distrust—Milan—Its Unfinished Cathedral—Da Vinci's "Last Supper"—Horse and Chariot Races.

THURSDAY, 28th. At ten o'clock we turned our backs upon delightful Florence, and were soon whirling along the rail. After passing Pisa, the line traverses a flat so low and level that, approaching Leghorn, the ships in the offing appear to be sailing on the plain. The city has by no means an inviting appearance, and smells as pitchy and as cheesey as other seaport towns; towards the sea the town appears a confused collection of houses and ships, walls,

forts, boats, and dirty water. We had only time for a short ramble through the city, but saw enough to prove that I had no cause to regret that my arrangements only allowed a few hours' sojourn in Leghorn.

At five o'clock we went on board the steamer, which immediately got under weigh, and as we left the harbour, we could observe lying at anchor in the offing, a small French ship of war, which, since the breaking out of hostilities, has been patiently watching two or three hapless Russian merchantmen, which safe, however, within the sanctuary of this neutral port, are not, it appears, likely to afford the Frenchman an opportunity to make prize money.

The Dante di Genova is a wretched little craft, affording the most scanty accommodation, and in answer to my request for something to eat, the dirty-looking steward coolly explained that as the passengers by this delightful boat are generally affected with the *male del mare* to a more than ordinary extent, it did not suit his purpose to

provide any eatables, and he had nothing to give me. In compensation for these evils, we have, however, a smooth sea, a clear sky, and consequent prospect of an early arrival at Genoa to-morrow morning.

Friday, 29th. Our last night's anticipations of an early escape from the confinement of the beggarly Dante, were destined to be provokingly disappointed this morning. When entering the port of Genoa before five o'clock, we learned to our unspeakable annoyance, that in consequence of suspicious reports of cholera from Florence, we should not be allowed to land before mid-day, the interval to be employed in opening and airing the contents of our portmanteaus.

I descended to the dirty little cabin, seeking to while away these tedious hours by writing, but was speedily dislodged by a fellow who entered with a fumigating apparatus, and soon produced such a smoke, as rendered the place untenable.



Returning to the deck and the broiling sunshine, I had ample leisure to study the boasted grandeur of the "City of Palaces;" and, indeed, from the harbour Genoa yet makes a very magnificent appearance, and, with its crowded shipping and railway, a very commercial and important appearance to boot; but we were all in a jaundiced, discontented mood, and more disposed to grumble than to admire.

Slowly as moved the hours, mid-day came at last; and obtaining our release, we hurried to the Croce di Malta, a large hotel well situated near the quay, and commanding a fine view over the bay.

This day being the festa of St. Peter, the streets were filled with the citizens in holiday attire, and we saw Genoa to full advantage. The massive grandeur of the buildings, and handsome appearance of the principal streets, are not more striking than the beauty of the women, which is much enhanced by the very graceful head-dress worn by the better and middle-classes

when abroad, and consisting of a long veil, or scarf, of white muslin, pinned upon the plaited hair, and falling in loose folds over the arms and shoulders to the waist.

Saturday, 30th. Meeting with few inducements to prolong my stay here, I have determined to proceed to-morrow to Milan, and have spent the day in a hurried run through the more interesting of the sights of Genoa. These are principally its palaces and streets, the shops of the goldsmiths, and the house of Columbus, said to be that in which he was born, though this is disputed, the honour being claimed for another house in the neighbouring town of Cogoletto. In the Palazzo Doria Tursi, now the Guildhall of Genoa, is also preserved a marble bust, and some autograph letters of the great navigator. We saw the bust, but the manuscripts, which are secured within a small opening in the pedestal, we were not able to gain access to, the custode being unfortunately absent.

Sunday, July 1st. Soon after five o'clock

we were at the railway station, and before six were speeding away from Genoa. Gradually ascending by a small valley, we shortly approached the tunnel that here pierces the central chain of the Apennines; and plunging into the mountain's side, we rumbled on in utter darkness for two miles, and at the end of ten minutes found ourselves upon the opposite side of the great barrier, and descending the valley of the Scrivia, a tributary of the Po. A part of the stream of the Scrivia is diverted, and passes through the tunnel for the supply of Genoa; thus a stream is turned to the Gulf of Genoa which was designed by Nature to flow to the Adriatic, upon the opposite side of the Italian peninsula.

Having now a declivity in our favour, we proceeded at a rapid pace, and before long the great plains of Piedmont and Lombardy opened before us, bounded in the far distance by the giant Alps, which I now beheld for the first time, looming indistinctly through the warm summer haze.

Passing the battle-field of Marengo we reached Alessandria, and were allowed a quarter of an hour to take a hurried breakfast; and afterwards proceeding, we came about mid-day to Novara. At this place rail-travelling towards Milan ceases, and we were transferred to a diligence, which set out shortly after our arrival for the Lombard capital, yet thirty miles distant.

In the vicinity of Novara we noticed much of the low swampy plain covered with green crops of rice, which is largely cultivated in this neighbourhood.

Passing the broad impetuous stream of the Ticino by a magnificent bridge of granite, we crossed the Austrian frontier, and here, at the dogana, we met with a specimen of Austrian illiberality and distrust. My baggage was here, for the first time since I entered Italy, really and rigorously searched. Books and papers were closely examined, clothes turned out, and I was provokingly compelled to open every little box and package that my port-

manteaus contained; not, however, being addicted to smuggling, I had nothing to apprehend beyond trouble and delay.

From the Ticino to Milan, the country, though fertile, and now rich with the ripening corn, is flat and uninteresting, and the straight, level road is in many parts confined between tall hedgerows, or plantations of mulberry, effectually excluding the landscape. The dust was to-day very troublesome, too; and I was well pleased when towards five the gates and ramparts of Milan came into view.

Entering the city by the Porta Vercellina, we reached the handsome Hôtel de la Ville just in time for the excellent table d'hôte, and during the evening meeting some agreeable hotel acquaintances with whom I parted at Florence, I already feel quite at home in Milan.

Monday, 2nd. The beautiful cathedral, which is the first point of attraction for most visitors to Milan, struck me as the most wonderful monument of human in-

dustry and perseverance I had ever beheld. The amount of elaborate sculptured ornament that loads every part of this enormous pile of carved marble is truly astonishing. Three thousand marble statues, large and small, constitute a part of these exterior decorations, and fifteen hundred more are yet required to fill the vacant niches and pedestals. Scaffolds are still reared against some parts of the edifice which is yet unfinished, though it has been near five centuries in progress, while of the earlier completed portions some are already showing evidences of decay among the minuter parts of the profuse ornamental carving; and this deterioration is accelerated—to their shame be it spoken—by the pilfering hands of unscrupulous visitors, who, among the traceries of the fretted screens and flying buttresses of the beautiful roof, have in many places broken off flowers, cherubs' heads, and other tempting morsels, and have even removed and carried bodily away several of the smaller statuettes,

which, with carved imitations of flowers and fruits, surmount the thousand points and pinnacles, and render the roof a perfect garden of marble.

From the galleries of the lofty spire, Novara, Brescia, and even Cremona, sixty miles distant, are discernable with the naked eye; and the prospect, embracing nearly the whole of the noble valley of the Po and its tributaries, extends over the broad plains of Lombardy and Piedmont from the Alps to the Apennines.

At the Santa Maria delle Grazie we saw the Cenacolo, the famous "Last Supper" of Leonardo da Vinci. The picture has been, and is still undergoing a process of restoration of a more desirable nature than those adopted on former occasions, for the present operator, instead of laying on fresh colours, professes to remove those of previous renovators, and thus to bring again to light, intact, the original painting. How far he has been successful in this we could not of course judge; but, to me, the picture

appeared one of the most wonderful results of the painter's art I have yet met with.

In the evening we went to witness some horse and chariot races at the Hippodrome. The latter were very interesting performances: the cars, fashioned in the exact resemblance of ancient war-chariots, and drawn by four fiery horses, harnessed abreast, flew round the arena at a furious pace; the race was three times round, and was well contested. Three chariots started, and that which brought up the rear during the early part of the race eventually came in the winner. The drivers displayed much skill and dexterity in the management of their unruly teams, and the speed at which they got round the short turnings of the elliptical arena, and address with which they passed each other in so confined a course, were really admirable.

A race in English fashion was less successful, and chiefly remarkable for the facility with which the riders parted from their saddles, one or other of these counter-



feit jockeys coming to the ground in every heat.

Another race, contested by five female riders, with habits and side-saddles, was very prettily ridden, and the fair winner having been presented with a bouquet, in size and form much resembling a large cauliflower, ambled triumphantly round the arena to receive the plaudits of the spectators.

Tuesday, 3rd. Rain during the morning kept me indoors, and the afternoon was spent in the picture galleries of the Brera.

A remarkable funeral procession passed this morning beneath my window: first there came a brass band playing at intervals slow, solemn music; next followed the coffin, borne by four well-dressed men; after these, walking two and two, came a number of others, bearing lighted tapers, and chanting a loud dirge in the intervals of the music; the procession was closed by an aged couple, with gray, uncovered heads. How much more touching and appropriate

this than the cold pomp of hearses and mourning coaches.

Finding that I am now within one day's travel by rail from Venice, I have, notwithstanding rather discouraging rumours of cholera, resolved to make a flying visit to the "city of the waves" before proceeding northwards.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

The Road to Venice—Lago di Garda—Verona—The Adige—Padua—Laguna—Venice—Dingy Gondolas—Unpleasant Impressions of Desertion and Decay—Square of St. Mark—Tomb of Titian—Belfry of St. Mark—Return to Milan—Monotonous Song of the Cicale—Railroads and the Vine Disease—Cheerful and Agreeable Appearance of Milan—Lake of Como—Turin: its Picturesque Environs—Miseries of the Diligence—Ascent of Mount Cenis—A Night of Horror—Valley of the Arc—Chambery.

WEDNESDAY, 4th. We left Milan at six o'clock; the morning was bright and fresh, and, as we sped over the level plain, the snow-clad Alps, bounding the landscape to the left, stood boldly out against the clear sky. Soon reaching Treviglio, twenty-five miles from Milan, and beyond which there is an uncompleted portion of the line, we quitted the train to proceed the next twenty-five miles by diligence.

My companion in the *coupé* was a large, bony German, who seemed to possess a

thorough knowledge of the country through which we were travelling, and, as he spoke Italian and was disposed to be communicative, I found his company an advantage until we stopped to change horses, when, getting out, he presently returned with his *hat full* of cherries, which he proceeded silently to consume with wonderful despatch, though with the greatest deliberation. This performance ended, my friend shook his hat and replaced it upon his head; then, lighting a cigar, he lent back in his place and continued puffing and dozing till we reached Coccaglio, to which point the railway has been completed all the way from Venice.

After a hurried meal, we again got away by the train at one o'clock, and, passing Brescia, soon came in sight of the beautiful Lago di Garda, whose clear blue waters, stretching away among the Tyrolese hills, are overhung by lofty mountains, while towns and castles crown the promontories of its indented shores. Some miles further

the impetuous stream of the river flows through the city, and the river continues along the level of the plain, leaving the hills behind it. The scenery is less interesting; but the picturesque is in some degree compensated by the luxurious appearance of the plains: over the whole of the most opulent irrigation system of the world great facilities being afforded by the regular condition of the land, which is always above the level of the sea. The contrast between artificial and natural beauty is so little rest is the result of the part of Italy, the whole of the country is again sown with maize, and the whole of the country is even so

passed Vincenza; shortly afterwards famous Padua afforded us a transcient view of her once boasted walls and towers; and twenty miles further, approaching the waters of the Adriatic, we crossed the Laguna, by a splendid bridge of more than two hundred arches, and entered the "sea-built city," as the shades of evening began to obscure the level shores and islands of the eastern horizon.

The usual delay and annoyance of passport formalities now had to be endured, after which we procured a gondola, and gliding noiselessly through the intricate watery highways, now silent, dark, and gloomy, we traversed the city, and finally reached the Albergo dell' Europa, near the mouth of the Grand Canal, where we procured quarters and went early to bed, not particularly charmed or inspirited with our first evening's experience of Venice, and resolved to rise early, and, by making the most of a long day to-morrow, to be prepared to depart the day after.

Thursday, 5th. Rising at five o'clock, I embarked in a dingy melancholy craft, sculled by a barelegged, cadaverous looking boatman—what a realization of the “light gondola” and “gay gondolier!”—and traversing the whole extent of the Grand Canal, returned by the broad passage of the “Canale della Giudecca.” The unpleasing impressions of last night were fully confirmed by the morning’s excursion, even the finest palaces bearing a deserted and decaying appearance, while the water of the canals is foul in the extreme, and in many of the narrower ones smells abominably.

After breakfast, setting out on foot and perambulating the narrow streets, I found the aspect of the city much less gloomy thus viewed than when traversed by its dismal canals, though the streets, owing to the total absence of vehicles or beasts of burthen, are nearly as silent as the latter.

The Square of St. Mark, it must be admitted, seemed to excel in magnificence everything of the kind I had hitherto

seen; and when the fine Austrian band of the garrison performed during the evening in this piazza, which was then peopled with considerable crowds, the scene in some degree relieved the general air of depression that everywhere pervades deserted Venice.

We visited, of course, the Palace of the Doges and the gloomy Cathedral, passed over the Bridge of Sighs, and descended by torchlight through dark intricate passages to the famous Dungeons of the Pozzi, within whose hideous cells, which one must stoop low to enter, the darkness is as of the blackest night.

Later in the day we crossed the Bridge of the Rialto, and stood in the Piazza of the once famous Exchange; and after a hurried visit to the picture galleries of the Belle Arte and the Palazzo Manfrini, with a peep at the fine sepulchral monuments in the Church of Santa Maria Frari, among which the beautiful tomb of Titian, recently completed, is conspicuous, we concluded



the day with an ascent to the belfry of the Tower of St. Mark, upwards of three hundred feet above the pavement of the piazza, and from whence is obtained a most magnificent and comprehensive view of the city, the lagune, and Lido, with the neighbouring islands and shores of the Adriatic.

The day was, I think, the hottest I have experienced in Italy, and mosquitoes were troublesome in the evening.

Friday, 6th. We were astir with the dawn again this morning; and after an early breakfast repairing to the railway station, I was not sorry at seven o'clock to find myself speeding along the rail on my return to Milan.

As the morning advanced the sun became extremely hot again; the road having been so lately traversed excited little interest; and the drowsy influence of the day was further increased by the ceaseless monotonous song of the *cicâle* that covered the trees by the wayside. I had a resource, however, in the conversation of a very

loquacious party of Lombard gentlemen who occupied the same carriage with me, and from whom I learnt, among other things, that the vine disease, which is said to be again making its appearance this year, is by their imaginative countrymen attributed to the railroads, with their shrieking locomotives, belching forth fire and smoke in such ominous resemblance to the arch fiend; and this enlightened opinion is not, I was assured, found only among the ignorant and uninformed.

Towards evening thunder-clouds rose above the Alps, and reaching Milan at seven in a pelting rain, I returned to my old quarters at the comfortable Hôtel de la Ville.

Saturday, 7th. Milan, though decidedly inferior in these respects to Florence or Naples, is a cheerful and agreeable place of sojourn. The principal streets are broad, and the general appearance of the city handsome and animated. The head-dress of the women resembles that of Genoa,

except in the colour of the material, which is here black, and it would be difficult to decide which of the two is more becoming. The beautiful scenery that so enhances the attractiveness of Naples and Florence is here, however, entirely wanting. Milan, standing in the midst of a great level plain, cannot be said to command any scenery at all, except from the summit of its lofty cathedral. The hotels, to judge by the comforts of the handsome Hôtel de la Ville, may compare with the best of southern Italy, and the living is excellent, the large trout from the Adda and Lake Como constituting a delicious item in the bill of fare.

Sunday, 8th. The first evening of my arrival here I met two Chilian gentlemen—brothers, a soldier and a lawyer—with whom I became acquainted at Florence, and who proved such agreeable and gentlemanly fellows, that it gives me great pleasure to find that our mutual plans admit of our proceeding hence on the way to Paris in company. To-day we made an

excursion together to explore the romantic scenery of the beautiful Lake of Como, deep embosomed among lofty picturesque hills, about thirty miles distant from Milan. We got away by an early train at five o'clock, and favoured with bright and most agreeable weather, returned highly delighted with the excursion, reaching home after eight this evening.

Wednesday, 11th. It was our intention to have set out for Turin on Monday last, but an indisposition with choleraic symptoms with which I was seized on Sunday night, has since held me a prisoner. The treatment of my complaint by Dr. Capelli, a native of the city, appeared so peculiar, that had I not felt assured by his conversation that he is a man of superior intelligence, and that he quite understood what he was doing in the present instance, I should have hesitated to follow his directions. The doctor at once attributed the attack to my recent visit to Venice, and his prescriptions were as simple as, under

the circumstances, they seemed extraordinary, comprising little else than cream of tartar, with iced toast and water to drink, and orange ice for my food. Having faith, as I have before said, in the worthy little medico, however, I swallowed his cream of tartar, drank iced water and ate orange ices, and all with such happy results, that I at once began to recover, and am now so well, as to have resolved on quitting Milan to-morrow.

Thursday, 12th. Towards noon, in company with my Chilian friends, who have kindly delayed their departure to wait for me, I took my place in the diligence for Novara; the weather was charming and our lofty seat in the *banquette* kept us free from dust, and enabled us to command a more extended prospect. The stubble fields were covered with picturesque groups of gleaners, and the summer song of the *cicâle* again filled the air.

At Novara we stopped to dine, and afterwards proceeding by rail, we entered upon

new ground, and approaching the hills, the beauty of the scenery increased; the distant frozen peaks of the higher Alps showing in picturesque contrast with the warm tones of the intervening landscape. Night closed ere we reached Turin, forty miles from Novara, and found very comfortable quarters at the Hôtel de l'Europe, in the fine Piazza del Castello.

Friday, 13th. Turin, for a capital and royal city, is but an inconsiderable place, though the proportion of large and handsome buildings is unusually great; and the streets, which are broader than those of Italian cities generally, crossing each other at right angles, and being perfectly straight, the vistas thus formed mostly terminate with a landscape among the picturesque hills that surround the town, and the effect is extremely pretty.

Turin has its royal gallery of pictures, but for travellers coming from southern Italy, there was more of interest, or at least of novelty, in the museum, where the

splendid collection of Egyptian antiquities, amounting to eight thousand articles, and including a large number of very perfect mummies, is said to be the finest in the world. The Armeria Regia, an interesting collection of ancient armour, we were disappointed in seeing, as to gain admittance, a written permission, obtained the day before, is requisite.

In the evening we drove round the pretty suburbs and to the public promenade, an open space without plantations, or other beauties than those borrowed from the fine distant landscape, and where we found the display of equipages and show of company generally very limited and poor.

Saturday, 14th. At one o'clock we took our seats in the diligence that crosses the Alps to Chambery. Although we booked yesterday, the *banquette* and *coupé* were then already bespoken, and we had no choice but the interior, the miseries of which, all those who have travelled by diligence well know; and although the first

thirty-five miles to Susa, at the foot of Monte Cenis, are performed by rail, we were committed to the vile durance of the diligence from the outset. At the railway station, after nearly an hour's broiling under the fierce sun, our vehicle was at length hoisted on to a truck, and we were wheeled beneath the friendly shade of the station sheds. After another half hour we got off, and ascending the wild picturesque valley of the Dora, speedily reached Susa; here we dined, and our coach having been re-established upon its own wheels, and no less than ten mules attached in front of the horses, we went forward, accompanied by many drivers, whose shouts and loud cracking of their long whips made a discordant accompaniment to the jingling of numerous bells attached to the collars of the mules.

The long ascent of Monte Cenis begins immediately upon quitting Susa, and as we progressed only at a foot pace, we soon abandoned the lumbering diligence, and



walked forward. The snow-covered summits of the mountains coming into view tier above tier, as we advanced, appeared to grow higher the further we ascended; rushing cataracts leaped from the precipices on all sides, and the scenery became sublimely grand. The road mounts the tremendous and inaccessible-looking steepes with an easy ascent, by long circuitous windings, which bring Susa again and again into view below; long after you have felt assured that you have fairly taken leave of it. On the mountains' sides every practicable patch of soil is cultivated, and just now covered with the ripening corn, while each small level space has its cottage; the ragged children all beg, and "*Datemi qualche cosa, signore,*" sounded continually in our ears.

Daylight forsook us while we were yet ascending, and it was ten o'clock ere we gained the level space at the summit of the pass; here I was not sorry to be overtaken by the diligence, which now proceeded

more rapidly, but I soon found ample reason to regret that the pace obliged me to keep my seat; far sooner would I have continued walking all night than have endured, as I was now compelled to do, the sickening confinement of that dreadful *interire*. A garlic eating Italian sat on each side of me holding command of the coach windows, which they, with Italian dread of the pure night air, rigorously closed up, and soon the atmosphere within became perfectly intolerable. Never shall I forget the poisoning odours, and protracted misery of this horrid night; nor would anything again induce me to undertake a night journey in the inside of a diligence.

Sunday, 15th. Morning broke with a clouded and threatening aspect, and found us still descending the deep narrow valley of the Arc. My neighbours now let down the glasses, and at six o'clock, coming to a small rock-begirt town where we alighted

for a while, and procured some bread and coffee, our troubles began to vanish.

As we proceeded the valley widened a little, and the scenery became as picturesque as it was remarkable; the landscape exhibiting the most enchanting contrasts of snow-capped mountains and wild savage crags, with waving corn-fields in all the richness of yellow maturity, luxuriant vineyards, and neat cottages, interspersed with rows and clumps of the most magnificent walnut trees. All down the valley we saw railway works in progress, giving promise that ere long the pass of Monte Cenis alone will interrupt a continuous line of railway from Paris to the Adriatic.

It was past mid-day when we reached the picturesque, but oppressively tranquil little town of Chambéry, where at the clean, unpretending hotel "Du Petit Paris" we obtained very tolerable quarters, and were not sorry to find that it is unnecessary to proceed before to-morrow, a diligence leaving for Geneva—our next destination

—at seven o'clock in the morning. Rain began to fall as we arrived, but the evening afterwards becoming fine, we made a perambulation of the town, and visited the public promenade, which is finely shaded by beautiful horse-chestnut trees, and was this evening peopled with a few groups of demure citizens, and melancholy-looking dragoons.

## CHAPTER XXV.

The Road to Geneva—My Fellow Travellers—Geneva, and its Lake—Valley of the Arve—Chamounix—Rocks and Pine Forests—Mount Blanc and its Glaciers—Fire at Chamounix—Ascent of the Mountain—Crossing the Mer de Glace—Pass of the Tête Noir—The Swiss Frontier—Martigny—The Rhone—Waterfall of the Sallanche—A Swiss Church and its Congregation—Villeneuve—Lausanne.

MONDAY, 16th. By seven o'clock, thoroughly revived by a long night's rest, we rumbled through the quiet streets of Chambery, and took the road to Geneva. The morning was again dark and threatening, and before we had proceeded far the thunder pealed, the rain came down in torrents, and we were enveloped in gloom, almost like the darkness of night, reminding us that we have indeed passed the Alps, and fairly bid adieu to the sunny skies of pleasant Italy.

A great change is also observable in the

appearance of the people here, particularly the women, whose spare forms and small hard features, rendered yet more unpleasing by the ugly disfiguring caps, contrast disagreeably with the picturesque figures and sparkling faces of the Italian contadine.

By mid-day the weather began to improve, and by the time we left Annecy, where we stopped to bait, the sun was lighting up a landscape less romantic, but scarcely less pleasing than those of yesterday, and the road being hilly, I had ample opportunities to alight, and, proceeding on foot, to enjoy to full advantage the bright sky and cool, fresh breeze.

Beggars were again numerous and importunate, but the long familiar cry of "Datemi qualche cosa" was changed to-day to "Donnez moi quelque chose."

Our fellow travellers in the diligence were an old French general, very talkative, and very emphatic, and who we took to be about sixty years of age, till he quite triumphantly informed us

that he was ninety, with his pretty young wife, who could not have been long born when her husband had attained his three score years and ten, and his little child, two years old, a production of which the old general seemed not a little proud.

We reached Geneva about five in the evening, and procured rooms at the Hôtel des Bergues, facing the lake.

Wednesday, 18th. Except for invalids seeking a pure atmosphere and bracing climate, I am unable to perceive any attractions in Geneva; the city, though it boasts some fine streets and handsome buildings, possesses little to interest, and the lake is seen to the least advantage hereabouts, the sheet of water being narrower near this extremity, and the shores low.

Yesterday was showery and bleak, rendering a considerable alteration of clothing necessary. To-day the sun shone brightly, but with a tempered heat, while a fresh

invigorating breeze from the lake rendered the temperature very cool.

We have spent two days rambling about the town, where the shops of the watchmakers and jewellers constitute the most attractive objects, and this evening I booked a place in the coach to Chamounix, as I am unwilling now, when so near that famous valley, to pass on without paying it a visit. I have also taken time by the forelock, and secured a good place in the Lyons coach for Tuesday next.

Thursday, 19th. Bidding adieu to my *compagnons de voyage*, who proceed to-day to Lyons, I quitted Geneva at seven o'clock. The sun shone brightly, and having secured an exalted seat upon the outside of the coach, I was enabled to enjoy the fine scenery that opened upon us in every changing variety as we ascended the picturesque valley of the Arve, the glistening summit of Mont Blanc constantly in view, towering above the hills and mountains of the nearer landscape.



At four hours from Geneva, the valley of the Arve suddenly contracts; the towering rocks approaching the stream on either side, and forming a narrow, savage defile, through which the carriage-way is led, and the valley again opening, the road continues good up to Sallanche, thirty-five miles from Geneva. Here we dined, and afterwards proceeded in light mountain carriages, each conveying four persons.

The road was very rugged, sometimes cut through the solid rock, and still ascending the course of the Arve, it at last became so precipitous and difficult, that spite of the rain that had now succeeded to the bright sunshine of the morning, we preferred proceeding on foot, to sitting behind the over-tasked mules.

Leaving the stream, which at this part flows through a deep rocky chasm, the track ascends higher up on the mountain's side, and passing through some shady groves of pine, suddenly emerges from their shade upon the green slopes of the little

valley of Chamounix. The rocky heights that for some distance below hem in the foaming stream, here partially receding, yield space for a small extent of arable land, which now covered with rich grasses, and chequered by numerous squares and patches of potatoes, wheat, and rye, appeared in picturesque contrast with the frowning rocks and dark pine forests, which on all sides crown these cultivated slopes, and enclose the little valley.

Towering above all, Mont Blanc, like the guardian genius of the place, looks down upon Chamounix, while the fine glaciers of Bossons, and the Mer de Glace, in their gigantic bulk, defying the power of the summer heats, descend quite down into the valley, and invade the wooded declivities and the green region of cultivation.

Numerous groups of workpeople, chiefly women, were engaged mowing, and preparing the abundant hay crop, and the sun breaking out soon after we entered the valley gave a finishing touch to the picture.

The carriages now overtook us, and resuming our seats, we in half an hour reached the village of Chamounix at six o'clock, and put up at the Hôtel de l'Union. Intending to be astir betimes to-morrow morning, and to make a long excursion upon the ice over the great Mer de Glace, as far as the Jardin, we, after having enjoyed the glorious spectacle of a brilliant sunset reflected in glowing tints upon the cold summit of Mont Blanc, went early to bed.

Friday, 20th. At a very early hour I was disturbed by the sound of cries so wild and peculiar in their tones, that only half awakened, I lay dreaming of the *crétins*, who are said to be so numerous in these Alpine valleys, until the increasing clamour and shrieks of women convinced me that something serious was the matter. Jumping out of bed, I perceived that the light which I had mistaken for the approach of day proceeded from a fire that had broken out in a building not far removed from the

hotel, and the roof of which was already wrapped in flames.

In a few minutes the house was all astir, doors banged, women screamed, and everybody was hurrying out in as great confusion and excitement as though the hotel had been already on fire. For myself, having packed my carpet-bag, and deposited it beyond the reach of danger at a large hotel on the opposite side of the stream, I returned to the assistance of those who had more luggage to dispose of.

By this time a dozen houses, including one of the principal hotels, were in flames, and the fire was raging so furiously as to threaten destruction to the entire village. The single inn upon the safe side of the water had become the point of general attraction for the inmates of the burning and threatened hotels, and the bridge was now crowded with travellers bearing trunks, bags, and armfuls of baggage in every variety and condition of disorder, the dishevelled tresses and imperfect attire of

many among the ladies betraying the extreme, though in most instances unnecessary, precipitancy with which they had quitted their apartments.

Having given my services to some among the fair fugitives who seemed the most overburthened, I joined the crowds who were attempting to stay the flames.

It was now broad daylight, and the tolling of the church bells had collected all the people of the neighbourhood to the scene. No systematic course of action was, however, pursued; none appeared possessed of authority or knowledge to direct; and the small fire-engine, scantily supplied with water passed by hand up from the stream, was quite powerless to check the flames, which with astonishing celerity spread from roof to roof of the shingled buildings, and speedily consumed everything to leeward of the point where they first originated.

All efforts being now concentrated to check the fire in its less rapid advances against the wind, and some slated houses

fortunately opposing its progress, the flames were got under by about eight o'clock, when, with the assistance of a heavy shower of rain, the fire was effectually subdued.

Together with several other Englishmen, led on by the excitement of the occasion, I very unnecessarily added my exertions to those of the assembled villagers, carrying water, and mounting on to burning house-tops, where we got ourselves thoroughly ducked for our pains; for the inexperienced firemen who guided the hose of the engine distributed the water in their excitement and confusion indiscriminately upon the flames, and upon the persons of those who were engaged in the attempt to subdue them; and as we now found it difficult to obtain even the temporary use of a room where we might effect a change of dress, we rather repented of our zeal.

The hotel in which we lodged last night, though not reached by the fire, was so completely gutted and deluged with water, that its chambers are uninhabitable for the

present: and the Royal Hôtel de l'Union, being now the sole refuge for the destitute, is crowded to the smallest garret. We succeeded, however, in procuring a scrambling sort of breakfast; and the prospect of any prolonged sojourn in this secluded little valley being now more than ever uninviting, we determined to employ the remainder of the day in exploring as far as possible the frozen wonders of this icy region, and to resume our journey to-morrow.

Mules had been turned adrift during the fire, and in the confusion that still prevailed were not procurable; but having with some difficulty obtained the services of a guide, I, in company with a young Belgian and an Englishman, who were my companions yesterday in the coach, set out on foot to make one of the shortest, but most interesting of the regular stereotyped Chamonix excursions over the Montanvert, and across the Mer de Glace, returning by the Chapeau.

The ascent was so steep and laborious that one of my companions soon turned back, and the other was inclined to follow his example. After two hours' toil, however, we reached the little rest-house upon the summit of the Montanvert, two thousand six hundred feet above Chamounix; and having refreshed with tea, bread, and the delicious honey for which this region is famed, we proceeded to cross the great glacier of the "Mer de Glace," an enterprise which we soon found to be of a much more difficult nature than we had anticipated.

Our guide, we now discovered, had not previously crossed the glacier this season, and being unacquainted with the most practicable track, soon led us among yawning chasms, and along narrow ridges of slippery ice, where we found it as difficult to comply with his oft-repeated admonition—"Soyez tranquille, Monsieur," as to credit his frequent assertion—"Il n'y a pas de danger." We did get safely over,



however, and reached the opposite shore, resolved never again to trust ourselves among the crevices of a glacier without previously furnishing our heels with the steel spikes commonly used on these occasions.

Once more on *terra firma*, we rapidly descended the rocky and precipitous path to the Chapeau, and thence leaving the track we proceeded, half walking, half sliding, down the steep mountain's side, beneath the dark shade of a pine forest; and regaining the valley, a pleasant walk of two or three miles through meadows and diminutive cornfields brought us back to Chamounix; and the greater number of the visitors who were this morning in the village having taken their departure, I was enabled to procure a bedroom.

Saturday, 21st. Provided with a guide and a mule, I quitted Chamounix at an early hour, and took the road for Martigny by the Pass of the Tête Noir. The day was delightfully bright and clear, and our route afforded us a succession of the most

magnificent views of Mont Blanc and his hoary companions.

About mid-day, in one of the wildest parts of the road, we passed the Swiss frontier, marked by a small stone pillar, and entered the rugged mountainous Canton of Vallais. Soon after we reached the Tête Noir, a tremendous cliff, upon whose dark, shaded face the sun never shines: the road is carried along the perpendicular face of the rock at a giddy height above the torrent, which is heard dashing and raging hundreds of feet below.

A little further on a newly-built and substantial inn occupies a romantic situation amid beetling crags. Here we stopped to bait; and having become thoroughly tired of my hard-mouthed, jolting mule, I gladly availed myself of an opportunity to return him to Chamounix; and committing my carpet-bag to the shoulders of my guide, proceeded on foot.

The road during the afternoon continued equally wild and beautiful, the view from

the summit of the pass by which we entered the deep valley of the Rhone and descended to Martigny being strikingly magnificent; and when at the end of ten miles we reached the city, I felt regret that the distance had not been a few miles greater.

Sunday, 22nd. Provided by mine host of the clean and very comfortable "Hôtel de la Tour" with a light one-horsed and four-wheeled nondescript sort of a carriage, I set out early for Villeneuve, twenty-five miles distant, and which I desired to reach in time for the mid-day steamer to Geneva. We were again favoured with beautiful weather, and the horse being a good one, we progressed rapidly, the level road following the plain which borders the turgid stream of the Rhone. Bounding this narrow plain on either side the river, the most stupendous rocks and mountain precipices rise in savage grandeur.

Shortly after leaving Martigny we passed the magnificent Waterfall of the Sallanche, a large body of water leaping from the

summit of one of these precipices at one mad plunge sheer down into the plain; this fall is said to be among the finest in Switzerland, and assuredly it would be difficult to conceive anything more grand.

When we had achieved about half our journey, my little driver stopping at a small town to bait his horse, I, attracted by strains of music issuing from the church, went in, and finding the service proceeding, remained until it ended. The church was the plainest I ever entered, no ornament of any kind relieved the nakedness of the bare stone walls, and the seats and fittings were of unpainted deal. The male and female members of the congregation did not mingle, but occupied separate portions of the building, and at the termination of the service made their exit by different doors; they appeared as plain, rigid, and unadorned as their church, affording a most dismal realization of "Swiss Boys" and "Maids of the Mist."

Resuming our way about noon, we

reached Villeneuve upon the shore of the lake, which is here seen in all its romantic beauty, overhung by towering mountains, or bordered by fertile acclivities, crowned with woods, and terraced with vineyards.

At two o'clock I embarked in the little steamer *Helvete*, and after calling at the beautiful towns of Vevay and Lausanne, and at several other towns and villages along the shore, to land or embark boat-loads of holiday makers, we terminated this delightful excursion, and regained Geneva as the last rays of the setting sun were reddening the clear surface of the lake.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

Lyons : its Handsome Bridges—Dijon—Insidious Landscapes  
—Forest and Town of Fontainebleau—Arrival at Paris  
—Dreary First Impressions—Disappointment of Expectation about Paris—The Exposition a Great Bazaar—Creditable Appearance of the Australian Department—Sensation Created by the Nuggets—Departure from Paris—Rennes—Drowsy St. Malo—Jersey—Guernsey Isle of Wight—Arrival at Southampton—Farewell.

TUESDAY, 24th. Yesterday was spent in pleasant rest, and in willing preparations for departure, and this morning, after an early breakfast, we turned our backs on Geneva, and were soon hurrying along the road towards Lyons.

The diligence, a French concern, was better horsed, and driven at a far more rapid pace than those of Italy; and perched in my favourite seat, the corner of the *banquette*, I was enabled to enjoy to full advantage the fresh morning air, and the fine scenery of the lakes, rocks, and moun-

tains, among which our road led us for the first half of the day; afterwards descending towards the broad plains of France, the landscape became less interesting. The bright skies, too, deserted us towards evening, and when at sunset we sighted the tall chimneys of busy Lyons, rain was falling steadily.

Wednesday, 25th. At five o'clock I jumped out of bed determined, though rain still fell heavily, to have a look at Lyons before leaving, although the train was to start at eight. After a two hours' walk through the dingy city—going by the banks of the Rhone, and returning by the Soane—without having seen much to admire, except the numerous handsome bridges that span the broad current of the former, here as turgid and foul as it is clear and limpid where it issues from the lake of Geneva, I returned to the hotel anything but dry, and as I had sent Gregorio on to Paris last night with my baggage, under the apprehension that at present lodgings may not

be readily procurable there, I was now in some difficulty. By taking breakfast in my bedroom, however, while my clothes were carried to the kitchen fire, I managed to get tolerably set to rights in time for the train, and at eight o'clock quitted Lyons.

At Dijon we had a halt of twenty-five minutes for refreshing, and by the time we again proceeded the weather had cleared, but even sunshine failed to impart much beauty to the flat, insipid landscapes, which continued of the same uninteresting character till we approached the end of our journey. Here the fine forest and pretty town of Fontainebleau made an agreeable break in the weary monotony of broad cultivated lands, and soon afterwards sighting the heights of Montmartre, we at seven o'clock entered the Paris terminus, three hundred and thirty miles from Lyons.

I found Gregorio waiting for me, but with no very good account to give of his success in finding quarters. Rain was again falling heavily, the long streets we plashed



through looked sloppy and cheerless, and when reaching Meurice's, I took possession of my dark little chamber upon the fourth floor, I must confess that preconceived ideas of the great capital of fashion were by no means realized in my first impressions.

Monday, 30th. For a traveller coming from the south, for one who has lately sojourned in Naples, Rome, and Florence, Paris does not, as far as I have been able to discover, possess any very powerful attractions, and as I am now anxious to rejoin long-severed friends, I have booked myself for a seat in the diligence to St. Malo for to-morrow morning.

The day following my arrival here, I found my former travelling companion of Sicily, Mr. D——n, whose kindness and hospitality have been unbounded; with the advantage of his guidance, most of the principal sights and shows of Paris have been already visited, and I feel little inclination to prolong my stay.

The Rue Rivoli is certainly magnificent, and when the extensive alterations and improvements now in progress shall have been completed, will perhaps be the finest street in the world; and in bright weather, the Place de la Concorde, and the gardens of the Tuileries, are pleasing and agreeable promenades; but the boasted Champs Elysées—a mere grove of limited extent, and beneath whose shades the bare ground becomes a quagmire or a bed of dust with every change of weather—will ill bear comparison with the beautiful Cascine of Florence, or the Villa Reale at Naples; and with the Boulevards I was much disappointed.

The frequent demand for material for barricades, having caused the destruction of the fine trees that once adorned these boasted promenades, the small saplings that have been planted to supply their places, together with the bright recent aspect of the buildings, produce an unpleasing appearance of newness and changeful instability.

The Exposition, too, disappointed my expectations, for although the collection of articles is as magnificent as it is immense, the whole being distributed in so many different buildings, the general effect is greatly damaged, and in no part is the *coup d'œil* very imposing; while so many wares possessing little value or interest, are everywhere mixed up and associated with the more important articles, that the whole affair rather resembles a great bazaar.

The Australian department was of course a prime object of attraction for me, and the very creditable appearance that our antipodean corner of the earth has, under the zealous management of our indefatigable commissioner, Mr. Macarthur, been able to make in the world's show, I thought very gratifying. The nuggets of course create a great sensation, and are all day surrounded by admiring crowds. The numerous woods which have been worked up into articles of furniture, and are thus shown to full advantage, also attract much

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attention ; and a piece of muslin of the most delicate texture, manufactured here from a sample of Moreton Bay cotton, is an object of general admiration. The New South Wales wines, too, as I learn from Mr. M——, have passed their examination with great *éclat*, taking high rank among their French and German rivals, and causing much speculative discussion here in connexion with the vine disease, which is so seriously affecting the production of wine in Europe.

Tuesday, 31st. In like mode as at Turin we were, when leaving Paris, at once placed in the diligence that is to convey us to St. Malo, although the first portion of the journey is performed by rail. After being subjected to about the same amount of vexatious delay and exposure to a broiling sun as upon the former occasion, we at length got fairly off about mid-day.

The dust, which rose in clouds beside the rushing train, drifted into the open *banquette* of the diligence in stifling quan-

tities, and, added to the hot sun and weary monotony of the flat, unvarying landscape, rendered the afternoon's journey so uninteresting and disagreeable that we were heartily glad when, early in the evening, we reached Le Mans and quitted the rail.

After dining, we again proceeded much more pleasantly; the air had become cool, the road was free from dust, and our coachman, driving *five* in hand, and changing horses often, proceeded at a good pace.

Evening closed in clear, cold, and sharp; but, as the night wore, a bright moon rose to enliven as well as enlighten our way, and we dozed, watched, and lingered through the tedious hours till morning came again, with as little of misery as is compatible with a night on a stage-coach.

Wednesday, August 1st. Soon after sunrise, reaching the fine old town of Rennes, we were allowed half an hour to stretch our cramped limbs, and to take a hurried breakfast. Proceeding, as the morning advanced, we found the roads thronged

with the country people, in their best attire, leading horses and cows, or driving sheep, pigs, or turkeys, and all making for Rennes, where it seems a great fair is held to-day.

These people in common with all the peasantry we have met with in France, or I may say since crossing the Alps, were more remarkable for their lean, wiry appearance, than for anything like comeliness, and the hard features of the women showed, I thought, to peculiar disadvantage beneath their unbecoming, high-crowned Normandy caps.

The scenery, on the contrary, though still quite French, in the total absence of bold features, was to-day less insipid, the usual monotonous undulations assuming occasionally the proportions of hills, and a profusion of wood imparting variety to the landscape.

Before two o'clock we reached our present destination, the strongly fortified little city of St. Malo, dismally situated, as it appeared, upon a large muddy plain, for

the tide, which has here a rise and fall of some twenty feet, was out when we arrived, and ships were strangely lying upon the stocks, quite out of sight of water; while boats and barges were scattered about, high and dry, upon the mud.

The Jersey packet not departing before to-morrow morning, I was compelled to curb my impatience, and spent the evening listlessly wandering about the drowsy little city, which, however when the tide returned, wore a much less desolate appearance than before.

Thursday, 2nd. With a smooth sea and clear sky, we quitted the harbour of St. Malo at seven o'clock, and in less than two hours reached Jersey, where, the tide being in, we at once entered the pretty bay of St. Aubin, and ran alongside the pier, when, hastening ashore, I soon found myself domiciled among long-severed relations.

Tuesday, 14th. In the society of kind friends, and enjoyment of the pleasant hospitalities of this agreeable little island,

time has flown so rapidly that, although we have already exceeded the period allotted for our sojourn here, it is with much regret we prepare to depart; we have, however, resolved to proceed to-morrow, and have secured a passage by the Southampton packet.

With its other attractions, Jersey possesses the advantage of scenery more pleasing and varied than would seem possible within a space of twelve miles by six. The general surface of the island is nearly level, and, when viewed from any of the higher points, appears to be a gently undulating plain, rich with corn-fields, and superbly wooded; quaint old churches rear their spires above the trees, and venerable châteaux, the residences of the old Jersey families, lie half concealed among fine groves of beech and chestnut.

Intersecting this apparent plain, but unobservable till closely approached, are numerous deep but narrow valleys, and descending into one of these in a moment



the scene is changed, as if by enchantment, the waving corn, the woods and spires have vanished, and you have the hills of Savoy in tiny miniature; mimic crags, plashing water-wheels, fern brakes, heather, and copse, with roads hewn in the solid rock. Then the indented shores are rich in picturesque bays and bold headlands —altogether the scenery of Jersey is charming.

Wednesday, 15th. The morning dawned clear, bright, and calm on this the last day of our protracted voyage to England, and the sun had not long risen when, bidding a reluctant adieu to kind friends, we went on board the *Despatch*, a fine boat of four hundred tons, and two hundred horse power, and were presently dashing along over a smooth, waveless sea towards Guernsey. Soon the island appeared looming through the summer haze, and, at nine o'clock, we ran into the bay of St. John and lay to for awhile, off the old-fashioned French-

looking town, to take more passengers on to our already crowded decks.

This operation disposed of with wonderful despatch, the paddles again revolved, and we stood fairly away for the shores of England. Favoured by a strong tide, that was rushing against the buoys and beacons like a mill stream, we sped swiftly on, and passing Alderney and the Caskets were again out of sight of land.

Noble ships now covered the sea on every side, some beating up channel with yards tight braced, while others with crowded sail were coming majestically down. An envious mist obscuring the horizon, the sun was declining ere the white cliffs of Old England at length met our impatient gaze. Then sighting the Needles we soon entered the Solent and passed rapidly along the picturesque shore of the Isle of Wight.

As we approached Cowes the royal yacht, lying at anchor before the town, surrounded by a numerous fleet of sailing

boats, like a swan amid a flock of ducks, told of the Queen's approaching visit to France.

Proceeding up the beautiful Southampton Water, we reached the harbour as the sun was sinking beyond the shady hills of Hampshire; friends were upon the pier to meet us, and now, kind reader, having travelled, I hope amicably, together from that far distant Australian cottage, and at length set foot on British soil, we will here shake hands and say, Farewell!

THE END.

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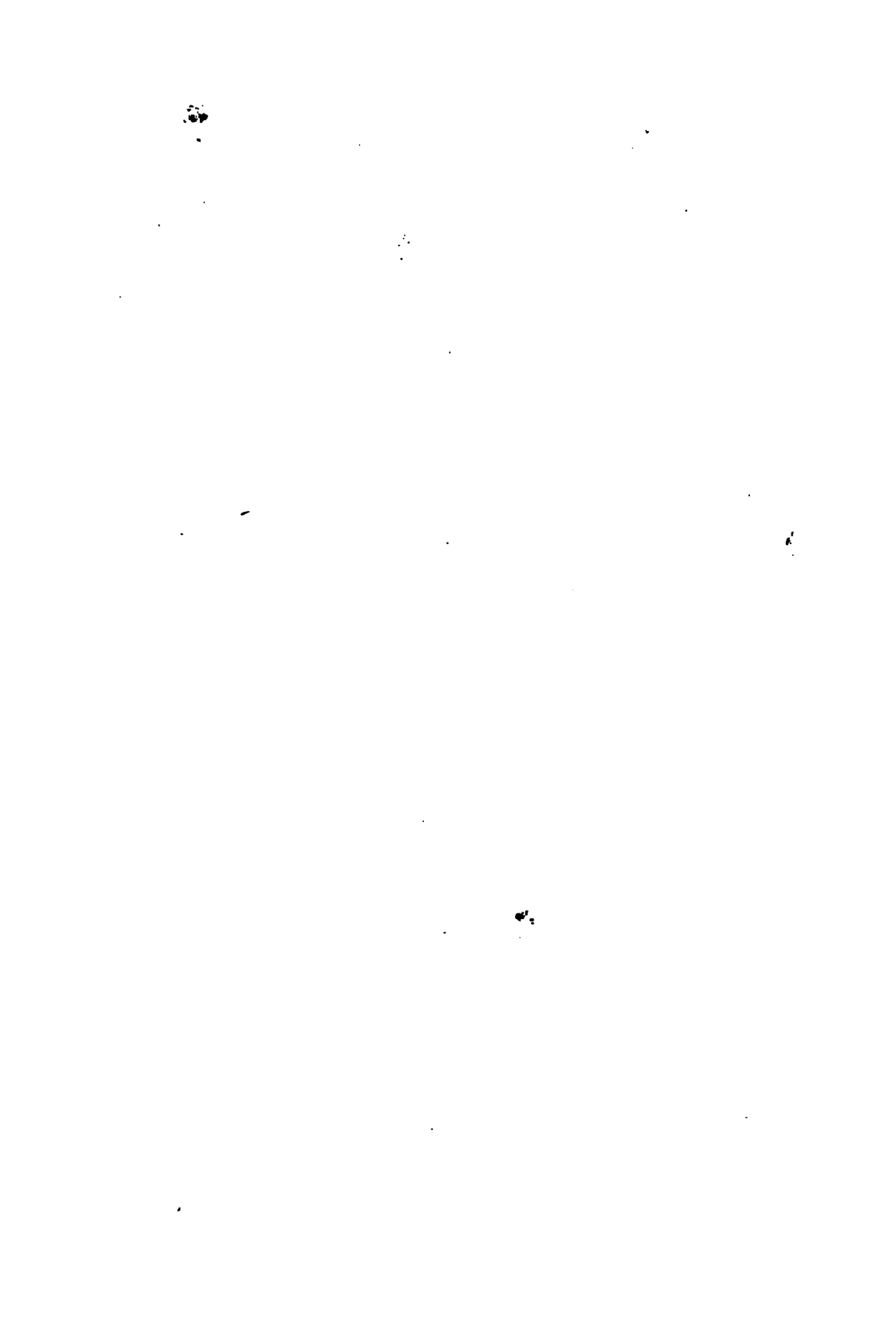
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